

An interview  
with Alexander  
Dubcek

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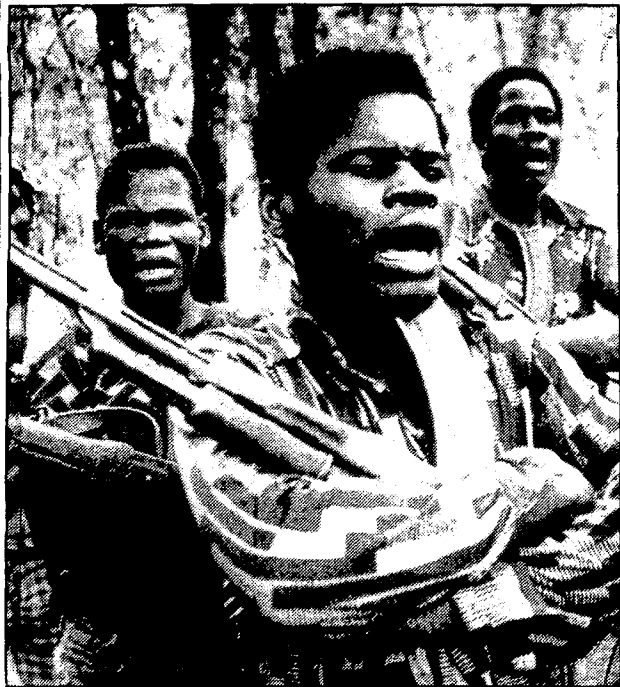
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## Grand Old Problems

and some embarrassing new ones.  
Coverage starts on page 10.







Young soldiers at a RENAMO camp.

# The real South Africa rears its ugly head in Mozambique

By Daniel Rosenberg

Recent peace talks between South Africa and Angola have sparked hopes for peace in southern Africa. But South Africa's history of regional aggression and accord violations suggests that its conciliatory tone is largely a public-relations ploy. Rather than pursuing peace in the region, South Africa is more likely intent only on improving its own image in the international arena and providing the Reagan-Bush administration with a foreign policy "victory" in an election year. As South Africa presents its peace-seeking persona to the West, its true regional goals are exposed by its ongoing war against Mozambique, its neighbor to the east.

This war, fought principally via South Africa's proxy, the Mozambican National Resistance (MNR or RENAMO), has devastated Mozambique's economy and terrorized its population. The socialist nation now faces a famine on the scale of Ethiopia's, with more than one-third of the population of 14 million dependent on foreign aid due to MNR tactics of burning crops and attacking relief convoys.

Last April U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary for Africa

Roy Stacy called the MNR campaign "one of the most brutal holocausts against ordinary human beings since World War II." Those who support the MNR, said Stacy, "cannot wash the blood from their hands unless all support for this unconscionable violence is stopped immediately." Stacy's condemnation came one week after the U.S. State Department released a report by independent consultant Robert Gersony blaming the MNR for the deaths of as many as 100,000 Mozambican civilians in the last two years. The Gersony report and Secretary Stacy's remarks are indictments of the Reagan administration's constructive engagement policy of using behind-the-scenes diplomatic pressure to induce change in South Africa's domestic and foreign policies. The Mozambican war is integral to South Africa's regional policy of maintaining dominance over its neighbors and buttressing apartheid.

Since at least 1980 South Africa has relied on a regional policy of destabilization and dependence to: • prevent neighboring states from imposing strong economic sanctions; • keep them vulnerable to economic pressure (raising port fees, sending home nationals working in South Africa); • prevent them from gaining sufficient economic strength to develop their militaries; • keep them preoccupied with domestic crises, thereby diverting scarce resources from activist foreign policies; • reduce ties between their governments and dissenters within South Africa; • prevent them from aiding the African National Congress (ANC); and • score a propaganda victory, maintaining that black majority-ruled countries cannot succeed.

To combat South Africa's dominance of the region the neighboring states formed the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) in 1980. The member states—Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe—are trying to decrease dependence on South African communications, energy and transport systems, and to rebuild member states' infrastructures. Central to the SADCC strategy is the use of Mozambican railways and ports to transport goods for landlocked member countries, which is faster and cheaper than South African transport. Mozambique's role in SADCC's success has made it a principal target of South African destabilization.

The MNR has crippled the Mozambican rail system, including the vital Beira corridor through which pass rail and oil lines that serve Zimbabwe. In addition, sabotage of factories, mines, bridges and roads has undermined the Mozambican economy. This has reinforced Mozambique's dependency on South Africa for the small but vital amount of foreign exchange it receives in port and rail fees for goods shipped from South Africa to the port of Maputo, Mozambique's capital, and in wages from mineworkers living in South Africa.

Besides attacking key targets of the economic infrastructure, the MNR has destroyed schools, health clinics, hospitals, villages and food storage centers. This has largely negated the few but impressive social gains achieved by the Mozambican government since independence in 1975. According to the Gersony report, the MNR war against the Mozambican rural population includes kidnapping, rape, forced labor, mutilation and murder.

In March 1984 Mozambique, desperate for relief, signed the Nkomati Accord, a bilateral mutual security agreement with South Africa. Essentially this agreement stated that Mozambique would stop harboring the ANC in exchange for South Africa dropping its support for the MNR. The accord was hailed by the Reagan administration as a victory for constructive engagement, but it soon became clear that South Africa had no intention of abiding by the accord. Upon signing, the Mozambican government reduced the ANC presence to a small diplomatic mission. In August 1985, however, Mozambican and Zimbabwean troops captured documents detailing South African plans to load up the MNR with supplies before the signing of the agreement and supply the rebels after the accord was signed. Then-Mozambican President Samora Machel confronted the South Africans, who conceded that the documents were genuine but admitted only to "technical" accord violations.

Since that time the MNR has escalated its assault on the people and infrastructure of Mozambique, including the July 1987 Homoine Massacre in which more than 380

civilians were killed. Several MNR escapees, defectors and civilian survivors allege that South Africa continues to support the MNR, which the South African government denies.

**Strains of war:** Currently, Mozambique is on the brink of both potential destruction and potential rejuvenation. The war against the MNR is at best a stalemate, with Mozambique heavily reliant on 8,000-10,000 Zimbabwean troops to maintain the current military state of affairs, according to the African-American Institute. Mozambique is also reliant on the Soviet Union for military support, though it has refused the Soviets permission to establish bases. The increasing refugee problem is straining Mozambique and some neighboring countries. Curiously, the severe strains of the war occur at a time when the Western nations are most willing to offer aid and support for economic development. This is due in part to what the U.S. State Department calls Mozambique's "turn to the West." Mozambique has become more accommodating in the last two years to Western demands for liberal investment policies. Thus numerous Western countries are moving to exploit the opportunities a largely underdeveloped Mozambique has to offer.

Besides the direct economic benefits of investment and development, this support for Mozambique puts Pretoria under additional pressure to reduce its support for the MNR. Donor countries want to protect the projects they are funding. Sweden, for example, has agreed to provide non-lethal security assistance—radios and transport vehicles—to enable Mozambican forces to better protect relief convoys and development projects.

**U.S. hypocrisy:** Under the Reagan administration, U.S. policy toward southern Africa in general and Mozambique in particular has been hypocritical. The U.S. is the largest donor of aid to Mozambique (\$100 million pledged at the

## INSIDE STORY

April United Nations conference) and a large SADCC supporter. But John Prendergast of Bread for the World argues that this support is virtually meaningless in the context of southern African realities. Unless the U.S. is willing to "go to the source" of destabilization, Prendergast argues, "the U.S. isn't doing anything for Mozambique." Nevertheless, it appears that the Reagan administration will continue to avoid directly condemning or taking action against South Africa, making the Gersony report and Secretary Stacy's comments merely hollow gestures.

This fall voters may consider two different approaches to the southern African region. The Democratic platform declares South Africa a terrorist state, and Michael Dukakis has endorsed the complete sanctions bill against South Africa being proposed by Rep. Ron Dellums (D-CA) and Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA). Dukakis stumbled in April, though, when he opposed U.S. security assistance for Mozambique. Then-rival Jesse Jackson blasted Dukakis, saying that he showed a fundamental lack of understanding of the situation in southern Africa. Jackson noted that this placed Dukakis to the right of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, both of whom support the idea. Reagan administration requests for non-lethal military aid to Mozambique in 1985 and 1986 were dropped in the face of strong opposition by conservative Senators Jesse Helms (R-NC) and Bob Dole (R-KA).

There is little reason to expect a major shift in southern Africa policy if George Bush becomes president. Bush also opposes non-lethal security assistance for Mozambique.

But the evidence provided by the Gersony report can be used to push the next president and the Congress to increase support for Mozambique and the SADCC, opening negotiations with the ANC and confronting and condemning South Africa directly for its role in the destabilization and destruction of southern Africa and Mozambique. □

Daniel Rosenberg is a research assistant for the Democracy Project, a New York-based public policy institute.

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By Arthur R. Kroeber

NEW DELHI

**T**HE SUDDEN DEATH OF PAKISTANI PRESIDENT Mohammed Zia ul-Haq in an air accident August 17 has substantially improved the chances of the country's return to parliamentary democracy. But any government installed after the elections scheduled for November 16 will face daunting tasks: easing military men out of the positions of political power and economic influence they have held for 11 years, strengthening Pakistan's weak political institutions, curbing separatist sentiment in the provinces of Sind and Baluchistan and neutralizing religious conservatives' demands for an Islamic state.

A week after the crash of Zia's Lockheed C-130 aircraft in southern Punjab—an accident that also took the lives of American Ambassador Arnold L. Raphel and several top Pakistani military officials—it was still unclear what had happened. The preliminary report of a joint American-Pakistani investigating team apparently favors the idea that a bomb was planted on the plane. Pakistani military sources seem to be encouraging speculation that the Afghan intelligence service, Khad, was behind the attack, but as *In These Times* went to press, no solid evidence had yet emerged either for that theory or for the most likely alternative—that Zia was killed by members of his own military.

Meanwhile, political leaders in Islamabad were cautiously optimistic that elections would be held on schedule. "The most important thing to my mind is that for the first time since 1958 we have had a change of government without martial law being imposed," said Fakhr Imam, opposition leader in the parliament dissolved by Zia on May 29. Martial law was first imposed for four years by Gen. Ayub Khan when he overthrew a civilian government in 1958. In 1969 his successor, Gen. Yahya Khan, declared martial law, which was continued by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto for nearly two years after his accession in 1971. The martial law instituted by Zia after his July 1977 coup lasted until 1985.

But even without such extreme measures, the military-bureaucratic elite that has ruled Pakistan for most of the past 30 years is still in control. The acting president, 70-year-old Ghulam Ishaq Khan, is a political survivor with strong ties to the army and bureaucracy. A former member of the civil service, he has served in the cabinet of every Pakistani ruler since Ayub Khan. As Bhutto's defense minister in 1977, he tipped off Zia—then army chief of staff—that Bhutto planned to fire him. Shortly afterward Zia staged his coup. Khan became chairman of the National Senate, the upper house of Pakistan's parliament, following the 1985 elections that were boycotted by most opposition parties.

Khan's elevation, which followed the constitution's rules for succession, is widely seen as a sign that the military will tolerate Pakistan's slow progress toward parliamentary rule while keeping a tight rein on policy—notably Islamabad's firm support for the Afghan mujahedin. Khan's first act was to declare a state of emergency and convene a 10-member "Emergency Council" to govern the nation. The council includes the chiefs of the army, air force and navy; the heads of the four main provincial governments (of which three are former military officers); and three members of Zia's cabinet.

Politicians criticized the emergency and



Mohammed Zia ul-Haq, the late president of Pakistan

## With Zia gone, Pakistan's factions joust for position

the council as unconstitutional. But Khan promised that political and civil rights would not be suspended and that elections would be held on schedule. He also announced that he would abide by a forthcoming Supreme Court decision as to whether parties must be allowed to take part in the polls—a marked shift from Zia's insistence on partyless elections.

**Seizing the initiative:** For Benazir Bhutto (Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's daughter) and the opposition, Zia's death presents great opportunities and great risks. Although Zia had isolated himself by dismissing his hand-picked prime minister, Mohammed Khan Junejo, on May 29 and had lost the support of the conservative Islamic parties that had been his staunchest political allies, he remained until his death the man who set Pakistan's political agenda.

Now the initiative could be taken by the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD), a precarious coalition of nine opposition parties chaired by Bhutto. At 35, Bhutto is by far the best-known and most charismatic politician in Pakistan today, and observers agree that a Bhutto-led united opposition could win the elections by such a wide margin that the military might be forced to let her govern. But can the opposition stay together? Skeptics say the imperious Bhutto, who has alienated leaders in her own Pakistan People's Party (PPP) by her authoritarian ways, will not be able to hold together a loose front of ambitious politicians who were united only by their common enemy, Zia.

PPP leaders were unconcerned by such

doubts. Party activists distributed sweets in the streets of Lahore after the news of Zia's death and discounted talk of a divided opposition. "The MRD is not in the mood to split up," said Anina Piracha, a People's Party activist and close friend of Bhutto. "It is in the mood to see democracy restored. After 11 long and painful years, people are ready for a change."

Bhutto, meanwhile, doused her firebrand image and opted for conciliation. In interviews last week she praised the army for its restraint and in effect promised not to conduct reprisals if elected. She also moderated

**Zia left two legacies: a government with the most institutionalized military role in Pakistan's history and a society in which the symbolism of Islam is more important than ever before.**

her earlier criticism of Zia for being too closely tied to the U.S., and said she would try to keep relations between the two countries cordial.

If Bhutto is elected, she will have to come to terms with Zia's two main legacies: a government with the most institutionalized military role in Pakistan's history and a society in which the symbolism of Islam is more important than ever before. Although Zia's much-publicized campaign to "Islamize" Pakistani society and government had more image than substance, many Islamic laws are now on the books and it will be difficult for any government to remove them. Moreover, "Islamization" was a critical factor in the continuing authority of Pakistan's longest-serving ruler—a political lesson the opposition would do well to heed.

Since Pakistan won independence in 1947 as a homeland for Moslems of the Indian subcontinent, its leaders have struggled with two conflicting sets of political symbols: the ideal of parliamentary democracy and the vaguer but culturally more powerful notion of a state that is "Islamic" in some way. An "Islamic state" along the lines of Saudi Arabia or Iran has little popular support, but religious slogans have been used at various times by almost all important political groups.

Yahya Khan unsuccessfully used Islamic propaganda to hold the nation together during the 1971 Bangladesh independence movement. In 1976-77 Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, a secular populist, sought to shore up his eroding popularity by banning alcohol and shifting the weekly holiday from Sunday to Friday. The multi-party alliance that fought to topple Bhutto in 1977 waged its campaign from mosques—the only places where public assemblies were allowed—and rallied behind the call of "Nizam-i-Mustapha," or "The System of the Prophet." A vague term, it served to unite religious conservatives with secular democrats, who interpreted it simply to mean the rule of justice.

**A delicate balance:** Zia was the first Pakistani ruler to use democratic and Islamic slogans to balance each other. At first he relied on the Islamization program and his well-advertised reputation for personal piety to legitimize his authoritarian rule. Laws were passed in 1980 establishing Islamic punishments for theft and adultery, and requiring most laws to be reviewed for religious orthodoxy by a special Islamic court. But in fact, the Islamic punishments went unenforced and key laws safeguarding women's rights—prime targets of religious conservatives—were not repealed.

Nonetheless, Zia continued to use Islamization and his strong support for the Afghan mujahedin to appease conservatives, while using the partyless elections of 1985 to defuse criticism from the left about the lack of democratic freedoms.

Fears that Pakistan will fall prey to Islamic fundamentalism are unfounded. But any secular government is likely to come under attack by the well-funded and vocal religious parties, and the cry of "Islam in danger" can always provide legitimacy to a military takeover in a political crisis. To ensure the stability of political institutions and the continuance of electoral democracy, the opposition must find a way to include the vocabulary and ideals of Islam within the framework of parliamentary rule. □

Arthur R. Kroeber is *In These Times*' correspondent in India.

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# INSHORT

By Joel Bleifuss

## Quayle tail

Paula Parkinson, the one-time lobbyist who in January 1980 shared a Florida weekend with then-Rep. Dan Quayle, two other U.S. representatives and several more men, is to be featured in the November *Playboy*. And there promises to be more spice than usual. So far, Parkinson—who admits she had affairs with less than one dozen House members, all Republicans—has only said, via *Playboy*, that when they were slow dancing Quayle asked her to join him in bed—an invitation party-loyalist Parkinson declined. (Quayle and the other two Republican House members at that weekend retreat later voted against a crop insurance bill Parkinson was lobbying against. After an inquiry into whether those votes were traded for sexual favors, the Reagan Justice Department decided not to bring charges.) Who will have the next dance?

## Tap your toes

Danny and the Quayles (a.k.a. Indianapolis disc jockeys Ricky Rydell and Tom Griswold) might have had a hit on their hands if the general manager of WFBQ-FM had not yanked their brand new single off the air. The lyrics of "I Spent the War in Indiana" read, in part:

*I spent the war in Indiana  
Getting shot was not for me  
I never went to Nam  
I never saw Saigon  
I only watched it on TV*

*(chorus) He spent the war in Indiana  
while his neighbors went to fight  
He never did a hitch 'cause his daddy's rich  
He was comfy and cozy at night*

*But the story isn't over.  
Now I want to be VP.  
And when we start the next war I'll be watching  
From a bunker below Washington, D.C.*

## Save the ozone

In a landmark court case, the state of Massachusetts has successfully sued a company that was illegally releasing ozone-destroying chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) into the atmosphere (see *In These Times*, Aug. 17). The *Boston Globe's* Dianne Dumanoski reports that a manufacturer of foam-based products, PI Inc. of Hyannis, has agreed to end all CFC emissions by year's end and to pay a \$700,000 fine—the largest penalty that state has ever levied against an environmental polluter. In June the state's attorney general, James Shannon, charged PI Inc. with the illegal release of 1,300 tons of CFCs a year. In Massachusetts any company that releases CFCs must first obtain a permit, something PI Inc. failed to do. Shannon says that this ozone depletion lawsuit, the first of its kind, could serve as a model for other states.

## Pornographic diversion

The sleaze continues to ooze out of the Justice Department of former Attorney General Edwin Meese. *Common Cause Magazine* reports that the department has, for the remainder of Fiscal Year 1988 (FY88) stopped all hiring, raises, training programs and purchases of computerized research tools in its criminal division. Further, travel money for the division has been sharply cut. Some criminal division attorneys say that Meese, a man fixated on the evils of pornography, had diverted money to the National Obscenity Enforcement Unit. According to department officials, this anti-pornography strike force was allocated \$1.1 million for FY88. But that amount does not appear in the official Justice Department budget nor was it requested from Congress. Attorneys in the criminal division say that this \$1.1 million almost exactly matches the monies that their budget is short. Their discontent was not helped by the news that the anti-porn vice squad was recently granted an extra \$40,000 in travel funds, while attorneys who are prosecuting high-profile cases of fraud in Texas banks have been forced to cut their travel in half.

## It fits any occasion

No more tell-tale rings on your hip pocket. No more clutter in your purse. "It's a piece of jewelry that can be used in emergencies," explains Carol Pollard, one of three Petaluma, Calif., flight



## Tightwads on Bourbon Street

NEW ORLEANS—The Republicans may have had fun in New Orleans, but they didn't spend much money—at least not in the French Quarter.

During convention week stories began surfacing that street performers were increasingly frustrated by the conventioners' failure to spare their dimes. By the week's end that frustration had spread to most established businesses in the Quarter.

"This has been a below-average week for us," said Dino Di Tomasso, a waiter at the Cafe Pontalba. "The convention people came in, stood around the bar and didn't spend any money."

Another waiter complained, "I could have sued the people who came down. I haven't made any money. It's ridiculous."

Sidewalk vendors on Jackson Square echoed those sentiments. "This was a conservative convention, all right. They were conservative with their wallets," said a portrait artist who called herself Emma Peale. "These guys were worse than

the Shriners, and I always thought that it was impossible to be worse than them."

Some vendors tried to explain their lack of business. Chet Anderson, who has sold hot dogs in New Orleans for the past five years, attributed the slow business to the tons of free food served up at corporate-sponsored events about town. "Yeah, it's been slow for all of us," he said. "But these people are here to conduct business. They're tired after a long day of work and don't want to come here after all that. They just want to go back to their hotel rooms."

Maybe. A lot of free food and drink was handed out during the convention. But other establishments didn't do well, either. And a lack of customers was not the problem. After each of the evening sessions, the streets and bars of the French Quarter were flooded with people.

"There were plenty of people walking up and down Bourbon Street," said a door caller/mud wrestler at Big Daddy's Topless and Bottomless. She complained that the Republicans only pinched their pennies. "The problem was that they'd all

stop at the doors and stare in but they wouldn't come in. And the ones that did sure didn't tip the girls very well. I spent all week here at the door trying to get people to walk in, and all I've got to show for it is a hoarse voice." Candy, one of Big Daddy's strippers, said she had had "better weeks when nothing was going on."

The only people who seemed to be uniformly pleased about the week's business were the cab drivers and hotel employees. Said one cab driver, "I'm just delighted. I hope they decide to hold another convention here real soon."

There is, in fact, talk of trying to get the Democrats to hold their convention here in 1992. And some have suggested that the Republicans hold their conventions here on a permanent basis.

That is a prospect that doesn't particularly thrill many French Quarter business establishments. Said mud wrestler Samantha, "Let me put it this way: I'm glad they've blown out of town. But I'll really be happy when they finally take down all of this red, white and blue shit."

—Reece Pendleton



## Latin American unity deals a blow to U.S. influence

QUITO, ECUADOR—In an unprecedented demonstration of Latin American unity, eight heads of state, including Cuba's Fidel Castro, gathered here in mid-August to witness conservative Ecuadorean President León Febres Cordero hand over power to his Social Democratic successor, Rodrigo Borja. U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz's arrival to this Andean nation, which for four years had been one of Ronald Reagan's staunchest allies on the continent, was of minor significance and was a clear indication of just how far U.S. influence has declined in the region.

Castro, in one of his rare trips to South America, was received with full state honors. He mixed his official meetings with spontaneous visits to various parts of Quito, where he talked with the local people. His reception as the "elder statesman" of Latin American leaders would have been unheard of just a generation ago, when the U.S. pressured all Latin American nations but one (Mexico) to break relations with Cuba.

Many of the leaders came to lend support to Ecuador's fragile democracy as it completed its second consecutive transfer of power from one democratically elected president to another since civilians retook the reigns of government from the military in 1979. This show of unity comes at a time of retreat for the region's military dictatorships.

Each leader also had his own reasons for coming to this mini-summit. Castro and Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega wanted to incor-

porate their nations into the process of Latin American unity. Costa Rican President Oscar Arias came to promote his Central American peace plan, while Colombian President Virgilio Barco and Venezuelan President Jaime Lusinchi sought to strengthen the Andean Pact. Presidents Raul Alfonsín and Julio María Sanguinetti from Argentina and Uruguay, along with Portugal's Prime Minister Mario Soares, used the gathering to develop closer ties with the whole of Latin America.

Ecuador's incoming president, who was the key actor of the event, used this convergence of Latin leaders to discuss ways of dealing with the serious problems facing the continent. All eight heads of state signed the "Documento de Quito" reaffirming each of the signatories' intent to forge a common stance on the issues of the external debt, drug trafficking and the economic crisis.

The five Social Democratic presidents exchanged ideas about their parties' reform programs emphasizing economic growth and selective state-sector involvement in the economy. They reject the old International Monetary Fund formula of fiscal restraint and cutbacks on social programs that have a high social cost for their populations. They claim that only through increased production can they generate enough money to pay their external debt and promote development in their nations.

The departure of Social Christian President Febres Cordero signalled the eclipse of his laissez-faire economic policies, which left Ecuador in a severe economic crisis, and his strong identification with Ronald Reagan's Latin American policy, which made him highly unpopular

at home. Febres Cordero broke diplomatic relations with Nicaragua in 1985 and refused to allow Ortega entry into the country as a head of state.

Ortega arrived the day after the transition of power and was cordially received by President Borja. The two countries opened formal diplomatic relations amid a call for a more independent foreign policy by all Latin American nations. Ortega also received an enthusiastic welcome in Quito's Independence Plaza as thousands of Ecuadorans cheered him when he made a floral offering to the heroes of the nation's independence. The crowd shouted anti-American slogans and one group burned an American flag in protest of U.S. intervention in Central America.

Nobel Peace Prize laureate Oscar Arias lobbied hard to promote his Central American peace plan, which days earlier had celebrated the first anniversary of its signing. He reiterated his opposition to U.S. support for the contras, and urged Nicaragua and the contras to return to the negotiating table. He garnered support for his efforts from leaders of the Group of Eight and Castro.

The key achievement of this historic gathering was the consolidation of ties between each of the leaders in attendance. The problems facing Latin America are great, and its leaders realize that a united stance is needed to confront them. The Quito meeting offered no concrete solutions to these problems, but it did make one more step toward realizing liberator Simón Bolívar's dream of one great Latin American nation.

—Paul Little

attendants who use paint, glitter, feathers and rhinestones to transform condoms into safe-sex jewelry. Chris Smith of the *Santa Rosa* (Calif.) *Democrat* says that the three women fashion earrings, broaches and bolo-tie ornaments out of the square-packaged Trojan and rectangular-shaped Lifestyle condoms.

## Crime of the century

Did Reagan steal the 1980 election? Did the 1980 Reagan-Bush campaign ensure then-President Carter's defeat by making a pre-election arms-for-hostages deal with Iran? (See *In These Times*, June 24, 1987, "In Short," Aug. 19 and Nov. 4, 1987, July 20 and Aug. 3, 1988.) Evidence suggests that is exactly what happened. Do any of the mainstream media corporations care? Apparently not. But that may change when the October issue of *Playboy* hits the stands on September 1. It contains the "exclusive" account of "the first Reagan-Iran arms deal"—no matter that the story is not so exclusive. This nine-page *Playboy* spread by Abbie Hoffman and journalist Jonathan Silvers clearly and concisely lays out what is so far known about this sordid scandal. For those who have been following the story, the article's greatest contribution is its detailed account of the 1980 Reagan-Bush campaign's counterintelligence network that kept tabs on Carter's attempts to win the hostages' release—an effort that, if successful, would likely have thrown the election to Carter.

**Hoffman and Silvers write:** "...By October 1980, senior Reagan advisers had informants at the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), the [National Security Council] NSC, even inside the White House Situation Room. Moreover, those informants had security clearances ranging from 'Confidential' to 'Eyes Only'....

"...Reagan advisers may have known as much about the [hostage] crisis as the president. 'Top Secret—Eyes Only' and 'Secret/Sensitive' documents from the U.S. Embassy in Tehran were found in Ronald Reagan's personal campaign file. Reagan said he didn't know how they got there. Angelo Codevilla, a Senate Intelligence Committee staff member, probably passed to Reagan headquarters details on the hostages' whereabouts in Tehran. One entry in [Reagan's chief foreign policy adviser Richard] Allen's telephone log reads, '13 October, 1980, 1151 Angelo Codevilla—938-9702. DIA—Hostages—all back in compound last week. Admin. embargoed intelligence. Confirmed.' Allen could not offer an explanation, though the message—written in his handwriting—is hardly cryptic....

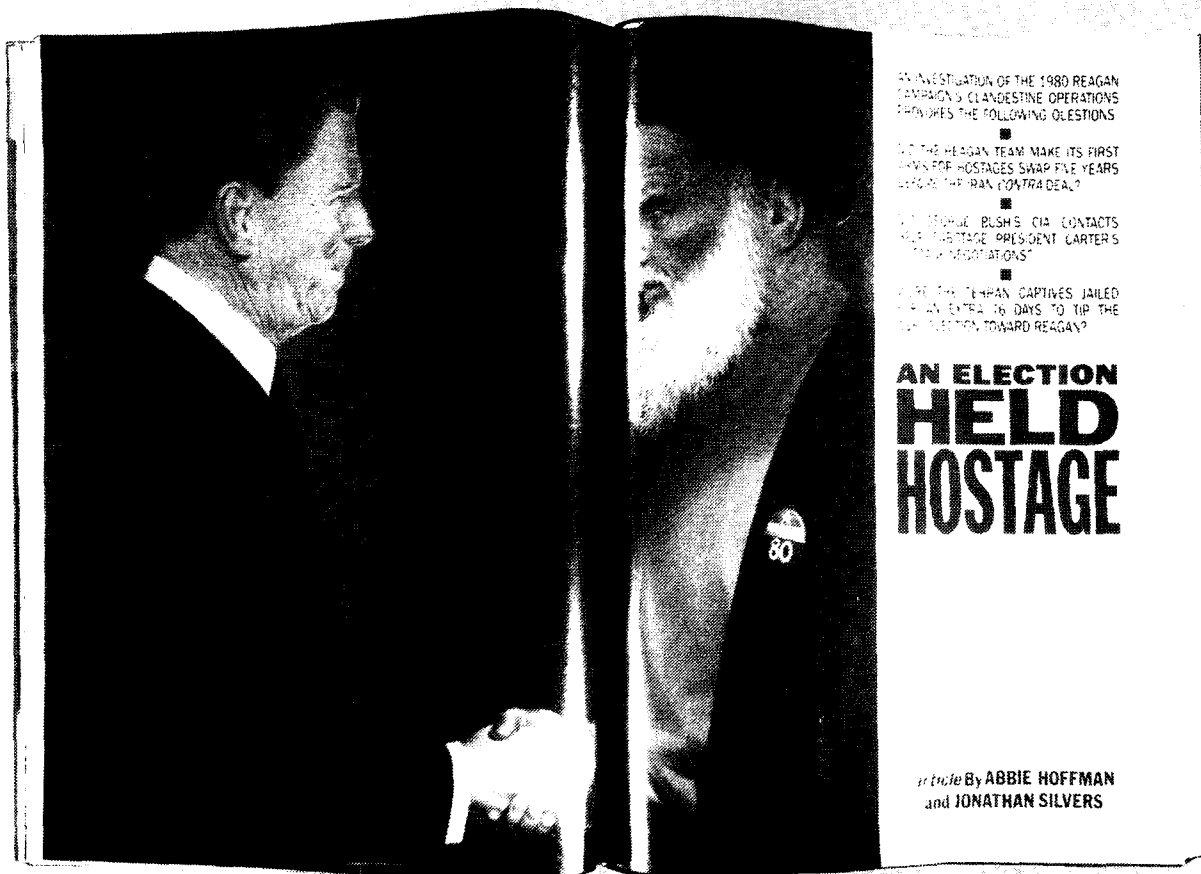
"[And] Gen. Richard Ellis, then head of the Strategic Air Command, put his services at Reagan's disposal. One memo to [Edwin] Meese noted, 'Due to his rank and position, [Gen. Ellis] cannot formally institute a meeting, but if a meeting were requested by R.R., he would be happy to sit down with him.... [The general] wants to blow Jimmy Carter out of the water.'

"Reagan's selection of George Bush as running mate...proved serendipitous.... Although his tenure [as director of the CIA] lasted less than a year, he maintained informal ties to the agency after he left and staffed his ill-fated presidential campaign with former CIA officials. When the Bush and Reagan campaigns merged in July 1980, their intelligence-gathering abilities increased substantially. Many CIA veterans close to Bush, notably former CIA Director of Security Robert Gambino, assisted [then 1980 campaign manager, soon-to-be CIA director William] Casey and Allen in campaign activities.

"Bush certainly had the ability—and the connections—to get the campaign into the intelligence communities," says [Carter CIA Director Stansfield] Turner.

"Prescott Bush, the vice-presidential candidate's brother, courted a consultant to the U.S. Iran Hostage Task Force named Herbert Cohen. In a Sept. 2, 1980, letter to James Baker (George Bush's [1980] campaign manager and [former] secretary of the treasury [who is currently managing the 1988 Bush campaign]), Prescott Bush said he expected that Cohen would provide the campaign with "some hot information on the hostages." Cohen eventually sent Casey four confidential NSC [National Security Council] reports.

"By the fall of 1980, the Carter White House was riddled with moles, spies and informers. But preoccupied by the continuing crisis and the campaign, the president's advisers remained ignorant of the dirty tricks being played by the Reagan-Bush team. 'We were aware that we had made enemies,' says [Carter spokesman] Jody Powell. "But we didn't think they were inside, chipping away at our foundations."



AN INVESTIGATION OF THE 1980 REAGAN CAMPAIGN'S CLANDESTINE OPERATIONS PROVIDES THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

■ DID THE REAGAN TEAM MAKE ITS FIRST MOVE FOR HOSTAGES SWAP FIVE YEARS BEFORE THE IRAN CONTRA DEAL?

■ DID GEORGE BUSH'S CIA CONTACTS WITH HOSTAGE PRESIDENT CARTER'S TEAM NEGOTIATIONS?

■ DID THE TEHRAN CAPTIVES JAILED FOR AN EXTRA 36 DAYS TO TIP THE BALANCE TOWARD REAGAN?

**AN ELECTION HELD HOSTAGE**

Article By ABBIE HOFFMAN and JONATHAN SILVERS

"The obscure we see eventually. The completely apparent takes a little longer." —Edward R. Murrow, pioneer TV journalist, as quoted by Abbie Hoffman and Jonathan Silvers in their October *Playboy* article on the Reagan campaign's 1980 arms-for-hostages deal, a story that was first reported by *In These Times* on June 24, 1987.





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## Dumping the dump: Nebraskans use ballot to fight nuclear industry

By Dick Russell

LINCOLN, NEB.

**W**HEN A GROUP OF CITIZENS ROLLED 10 scrolls filled with close to 60,000 signatures down the Capitol steps here in early July, it did not go unnoticed by the nation's nuclear industry. The petition, with far more than enough names needed to get an initiative on statewide ballots, meant Nebraska voters will have a choice in November about whether or not to withdraw from the Central States Low-Level Radioactive Waste Compact. And if they do, the country's whole compact setup—which puts the waste burden on the states, not the nuclear-waste producers or the federal government—may go up in smoke.

That's not something the nuclear power industry wants to see happen. A coalition of utility companies from Louisiana, Kansas and Arkansas is paying two Nebraska lawyers—including a former governor of the state—to try to get the initiative declared illegal before the election.

**Getting dumped on:** If the nuclear industry is clearly nervous about the grass-roots referendum drive—headed by a group called Nebraskans for the Right to Vote—it's for good reason. In many parts of the country, as much as 90 percent of low-level radioactive waste comes from nuclear reactors. Just about everything except the spent fuel rods from reactor cores is allowed to be classified "low-level" by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. That includes such materials as strontium 90 and cesium 137, each with hazardous life-spans of about 300 years.

But the industry has yet to come up with any way of dealing with its own lethal by-

products, save for burying it in someone else's backyard. And that "solution" has proved disastrous. Since 1977 three out of the six commercial low-level disposal facilities have been shut down after plutonium and other contaminants leaked into local ground water in Illinois, Kentucky and New York. A fourth dump-site in South Carolina is now leaking as well.

Half of these disaster spots are the responsibility of a still-operating firm that changed its name a few years back from the Nuclear Engineering Company to US Ecology, Inc. It has now joined forces with the multinational Bechtel Group—the No. 1 builder of nuclear plants in the world—as its "technical adviser." US Ecology/Bechtel have the contract to build a new \$40 million radioactive waste facility in Nebraska.

By 1993, if all goes according to their plan, a local site selected and built by these companies is to begin receiving all of the low-level waste from within Nebraska and four nearby states (and their seven nuclear power plants). The arrangement would continue for

the next 30 years.

**Playing host:** It's all part of a process hastily established by Congress in 1980 under prodding by South Carolina Republican Sen. Strom Thurmond. Under the legislation, the federal government passed the burgeoning nuclear-waste problem to the 50 states and strongly suggested that they form regional compacts (or face substantial federal penalties) to deal with it. In the Central Compact area, US Ecology/Bechtel last year beat out Westinghouse in the bidding for the site contract. The company soon recommended Nebraska to be the "host" state—a decision based ostensibly on geological factors and waste volume generated. The compact commission members—state environmental agency officials from Nebraska, Oklahoma, Kansas, Arkansas and Louisiana—concurred in a 4-1 vote in December.

This apparently posed no problem for Nebraska Gov. Kay Orr or most of the state legislature, wooed by promises of improved leak-proof technology and eventual millions in economic incentives for their predominantly rural population. But it didn't sit well with Sam Welsch, a 34-year-old beekeeper and health counselor who, as head of the Western Nebraska Resources Council, had been spearheading the local anti-dumping effort. Welsch's drive to let Nebraska's voters decide whether they want responsibility for the compact's waste soon mobilized nearly 1,000 people gathering voters' signatures in all but six of the state's 93 counties.

Nebraska isn't the only state up in arms about becoming a dumping ground for nuclear waste. In March 1987, more than 8,000 people turned out in the small town of Beloit in neighboring Kansas to protest such a pos-

sibility. In Michigan, selected as waste "host" for the seven-state Midwest compact, activists are mounting a similar petition drive aimed at the 1990 election. And in North Carolina, host designee in the Southwest region, low-level waste is already a major issue in the gubernatorial race.

But Nebraska is, for now, the test case of the compact system. Should the state pull out, Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton has stated publicly that his own state would follow the next day. The Kansas state senate already

### ENVIRONMENT

stopped a few votes short of bidding the compact farewell a year ago. And if one regional compact goes, a domino effect is considered likely elsewhere—thrusting the dilemma back in the laps of Washington and the nuclear industry.

**The fight:** So the power companies are pulling out all the stops. A few days after Nebraska's successful push to get the initiative on the ballot, a lawsuit seeking to invalidate the initiative was filed in the state's supreme court. Listed as plaintiff was a Lincoln civil engineer, Hal Schroeder, who admitted he wasn't paying the legal fees and said he didn't know who was. Welsch demanded, "What are they hiding and why can't they face us?" Attorneys cited client confidentiality, but the state's Accountability and Disclosure Commission ruled that whoever was financing the suit should be made known.

Then, on July 27, Kansas' Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation, Arkansas Power and Light of Little Rock, Gulf States Utilities of Baton Rouge and Louisiana Power and Light of New Orleans—representing every nuclear plant in the compact except Nebraska's pair—came forward. They claimed they were going to court because the referendum, if successful, would be a violation of the federal compact law. The Nebraska Public Power District, already barred by the state's Accountability overseers from spending money to oppose the issue, later admitted it was budgeting \$250,000 for a "public information campaign"—which is now being challenged by Welsch's group as illegal.

That "public information" includes what Welsch and others who oppose the dumping view as scare tactics. The industry charges that, should Nebraska leave the compact, the state would lose protection under federal law and leave itself wide open for the forced acceptance of any other state's nuclear waste. The industry also says that without the compact, the state would have to spend \$190 million to build and operate its own dump—a figure Welsch calls "absurd and speculative."

**Money talks:** While the charges and counter-charges fly, US Ecology/Bechtel are coolly going about their business of soliciting the potential interest of Nebraska counties and towns. In this, they've had the support of the state's League of Women Voters, recipient of a \$50,000 grant from the companies to help form a "citizens advisory committee" in searching out the most suitable waste sites. (The League got a similar \$30,000 fee from US Ecology/Bechtel in California, where plans are in progress to build a low-level facility in the desert.)

As of mid-August, 21 counties and 48 communities in Nebraska had reportedly sent letters to US Ecology/Bechtel indicating

**Nebraskans may be able to vote on whether to withdraw from a regional compact that makes their state the home of a low-level radioactive waste dump.**



they're at least willing to listen to proposals. The companies have promised to narrow the list of contenders to three by mid-November, which will then split a \$300,000 pot just for having their hats in the ring.

"You hear numerous variations on what I call the nuclear lottery game, a big prize for the finalists," says Kansas attorney Steve Boyda, who's been crossing the border regularly to speak at Nebraska town meetings. "It's an appeal to poor rural communities where tax dollars are scarce. They see it in terms of a new fire truck or grader, without recognizing the long-term consequences. But the Fifth Avenue advertising gimmicks, as we see them, are starting to tarnish. Folks are beginning to recognize the underlying motive, which is to shift ownership and liability for damages over time to the taxpayers of the chosen state."

Indeed, US Ecology/Bechtel are embarked on what Lincoln activist Lynn Moorer calls "a gobbledygook campaign." She notes that the firms have the power under the Central Compact setup to build wherever they deem suitable, whether a local area wants it or not. Moorer is also skeptical about US Ecology/Bechtel promises about tri-level, above-ground storage vaults—a system that would keep the waste away from ground water. "State law allows for shallow-land burial," says Moorer, "and, because it's so much cheaper, there's a strong possibility that's what we'll end up getting."

In Sheffield, Ill., and Maxey Flats, Ky., shallow-land burial meant that US Ecology simply dumped the nuclear waste into unlined pits. While the company insists it has learned from its mistakes (the estimated cost of monitoring and maintaining US Ecology's closed sites runs into several hundred millions, much larger than the company's total assets of \$55 million), its track record is scarcely one that inspires confidence.

In May the Louisville-headquartered firm settled a suit with the state of Illinois for \$8 million—far below the \$97 million in damages the state was seeking to clean up leaking radioactive and hazardous dumps in Sheffield. Kentucky, meanwhile, is also stuck with the bulk of a multi-million-dollar cleanup tab. Since American Nuclear Insurance—the company that regularly insures the industry—has declared a moratorium on any insurance for new sites, who would bear liability for any similar problems in Nebraska is an open question. "There is nothing in its state law," says Dianne D'Arrigo of the Washington-based Nuclear Information and Resource Service, "to require US Ecology to do much more than they already didn't do at the other sites."

But as D'Arrigo notes, US Ecology's parent corporation (American Ecology) has another subsidiary called DETOX. "This division cleans up ground water. So here they are making money contaminating to an 'acceptable' level, but just in case it's beyond acceptable, they can make more money cleaning it up."

**Bechtel's role:** Where the San Francisco-based Bechtel construction corporation really fits into the scheme is not entirely clear. Bechtel—which provided several members of Ronald Reagan's inner circle (including Caspar Weinberger and George Shultz) and which recently came under scrutiny as a financial conduit in the Iraqi pipeline scandal—is a newcomer to the nuclear waste field. Some industry-watchers figure that Bechtel and its billions are simply there to bail out US Ecology if necessary.

As word about the US Ecology Bechtel

machinations surfaces in Nebraska, several previously interested communities are now withdrawing their names from site consideration. The Jefferson County Board of Commissioners, for example, quickly backed away after some residents threatened to boycott businesses owned by people who favored constructing the facility there. "There's so much hostility that it seemed like the community could be torn apart," Board Chairman Ivan Zimmerman told the

*Lincoln Journal*. As Welsch puts it, "If we hadn't had the drought this summer, following a number of years of a depressed farm economy, US Ecology would be laughed out of town everywhere."

A court decision on the initiative issue is expected in early September, with lawyers for Welsch's group anticipating dismissal of the utilities' challenge to the citizens. Nebraska's assistant attorney general, Charlie Lowe, has already commented that a court

has no real authority to make a decision on an issue before it has even gone on the ballot.

What the Nebraska activists are seeking is simply a say in who will handle their own state's radioactive waste, with eventual voter approval on how and where. It hardly seems too much to ask.

**Dick Russell** writes regularly on environmental issues for *In These Times* as well as a variety of national publications.

## How the power of money beats the power of positive thinking

While some anti-nuclear groups are using ballot initiatives to battle nuclear waste dumping in their regions (see accompanying story), other organizations are aiming the same electoral weapon at a different target: the nuclear plants themselves. But though it may be possible to shut down a nuclear power plant by a citizen-sponsored ballot initiative, recent history shows that it is very difficult. The nuclear industry does not give up easily, and has much more money to spend than the opponents of nuclear power.

The first public vote on shutting down existing nuclear power plants was in California in 1976. It lost by 67 percent to 33 percent. In 1987 a Maine ballot initiative lost by 59 percent to 41 percent. In that vote, supporters of the initiative spent \$600,000, while the nuclear industry spent \$5 million.

The anti-nuclear movement has been more successful at preventing construction of new plants, winning four out of 12 elections. But since 1976, all seven ballot measures to close existing nuclear plants have failed. A local California vote on the Rancho Seco nuclear plant was the latest electoral defeat.

Proponents and opponents of nuclear power are now refining their strategies for a November 8 ballot initiative in Massachusetts.

• **Rancho Seco:** "The best thing we learned from Rancho Seco," said Matt Wilson of Citizens for Safe Energy in Massachusetts, "is that it's possible" to beat the nuclear industry.

In June the citizens of Sacramento came within a percentage point of permanently shutting down the Rancho Seco nuclear power plant. Voters had to decide on two independent ballot measures, "B" and "C." B, placed on the ballot by anti-nuclear forces, called for immediate shutdown of the Rancho Seco plant. C, an initiative sponsored by the entity running Rancho Seco, called for continued operation of the plant for 18 months, followed by another vote.

Measure B was put on the ballot by Sacramentans for Safe Energy (SAFE). It's volunteers collected 50,000 petition signatures, beginning in 1986, to get on the ballot for the November 1987 election. In 1988, Campaign California, a Citizen Action affiliate with a statewide canvass organization, joined SAFE in the battle.

Rancho Seco was shut down for major renovation in 1985 after nearly 100 temporary stoppages. With the same Babcock and Wilcox design as Three Mile Island, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) rated Rancho Seco the sixth-worst-run commercial power plant in the country. The Sacramento Municipal Utility District's (SMUD) own study recommended shutting down the plant. Ed Smeloff, a SMUD board member, was publicly out-

spoken against Rancho Seco. Early polls showed 55 percent support for measure B. It seemed that if a ballot initiative could shut down any nuclear power plant, it was Rancho Seco.

But the other four SMUD board members refused to allow measure B on the ballot until forced to by a lawsuit. The vote was delayed from November 1987 to the June 7, 1988, California primary. In the meantime, SMUD spent \$400 million to restart the plant by March 1988, and the SMUD board put its own initiative, measure C, on the ballot. The SMUD board, an elected legislative body, did not need to collect signatures.

Supporters of measure C spent over \$1 million on their campaign, more than three times the total campaign budget for measure B. They bought close to 500 hours of TV time, did large-scale direct mailing and bought an advertising supplement in the *Sacramento Bee*, which has a circulation of 245,000.

The campaign concentrated on two themes: economics and "the new Rancho Seco." Ratepayers would have to pay for the plant whether it operated or not, anti-shutdown forces claimed, and without the plant Sacramento would be dependent on imported natural gas with no firm price controls. They argued that \$400 million had already been spent to restart "the new Rancho Seco," and it was generating \$250,000 worth of electricity every day. Wasn't it worth an 18-month test?

Most of the \$1 million was raised from out-of-state nuclear power interests, including \$100,000 from Duke Power and Light Company of North Carolina. Duke was also negotiating to buy the plant from SMUD.

SAFE, meanwhile, organized hundreds of volunteers to get out the vote for measure B. The group had up to 40 phoners working every night for weeks before the vote. Together with Campaign California, SAFE set up a precinct-by-precinct organization for election day. Campaign California sent three direct-mail pieces to more than 100,000 people, paid for a radio advertising campaign, and won close to 200 hours of fairness doctrine television time. And they brought their entire statewide canvass staff to Sacramento to help get out the vote.

On election day, the million-dollar ad campaign won. Measure B lost by 50.6 percent to 49.4 percent, and measure C won by 51.7 percent to 48.3 percent.

• **Massachusetts:** Citizens for Safe Energy in Massachusetts, perhaps the best-funded and organized anti-nuclear organization yet to take an initiative to the voters, hopes to shut down both the problem-plagued Pilgrim and the antiquated Yankee Rowe nuclear power plants. The group has a campaign budget of \$350,000.

The group is a coalition of MassPIRG, which has 100,000 members, Greenpeace, which has 60,000 state members, and several other local groups that have opposed Pilgrim and Yankee Rowe for years. In addition, the Clamshell Alliance, normally a civil-disobedience group, is making this its first election campaign. Together, the groups collected 120,000 signatures to get on the ballot.

This ballot initiative comes at the end of a long and so far unsuccessful fight against the worst nuclear power plant still operating in the U.S. "Pilgrim has been a disaster from the beginning," said Wilson. It has the worst radiation exposure to workers of any plant, it has operated less than 50 percent of the time and since the 1985 shutdown management has announced 145 restart dates, but not met any of them. After spending \$500 million in repairs, there are still over 2,000 more problems to be fixed.

Yankee Rowe is the oldest commercial nuclear power plant in the country and is scheduled for decommissioning in 1997. The Union of Concerned Scientists listed it as one of the five plants most likely to have a serious accident.

But the shutdown initiative is opposed by perhaps the most sophisticated campaign yet to keep the plants operating. According to Wilson, the pro-nuclear forces will spend \$7 million to \$8 million to try to defeat the initiative.

"We're the end of the pipeline, heavily dependent on oil," said Bob Palmer, campaign spokesman for Massachusetts Citizens Against the Shut Down Initiative. Palmer is a professional campaign consultant who has worked in 17 races, including chairing a Massachusetts lieutenant governor's election campaign.

"We formed a committee that surprised a lot of people," said Palmer. "It's composed of 130 people from across the state, not from the utilities. They represent all the major businesses, major labor organizations, and include six college presidents and several environmentalists."

Twenty consecutive days of temperatures above 90 degrees this summer greatly increased concern in Massachusetts about the "greenhouse effect." The hot summer—and its increased energy demands—has no doubt strengthened the case of the Citizens Against the Shut Down Initiative, which has been stressing that nuclear power is needed to combat acid rain and global warming.

"If people go to the voting booth thinking this is to keep Pilgrim closed, we'll win," said Wilson. But if voters are more concerned on election day about future energy shortages related to long, hot summers and about acid rain, the initiative could—like its predecessors—be doomed.

—Jeremiah Kaplan



By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

**O**N AUGUST 6 A TRAIN FROM CHATEAU Thierry failed to stop as it entered the Gare de l'Est station here. It rammed into another train, killing one passenger and injuring 57 others. This was the third rail disaster of a series. The worst was the first, last June 27, when a suburban train's brakes failed as it roared into another Paris station, the Gare de Lyon. The runaway train tore straight into a crowded train about to pull out, crushing 56 passengers to death and leaving more than 30 injured or mutilated.

Then on July 19 a similar accident occurred in Toulouse. Nobody was killed, but 17 people were injured.

Three in a row like that was too much. The new Socialist minister of transport called sternly for the resignation of the head of the French National Railroad Company, the SNCF. He promptly left. But railroad union spokesmen quickly observed that the resignation of SNCF President Philippe Rouvillois did not at all solve the increasingly alarming problem of deteriorating safety on France's railroad system, one of the world's finest.

The problem is symptomatic of the faulty integration of modern technologies into contemporary structures of work and public service.

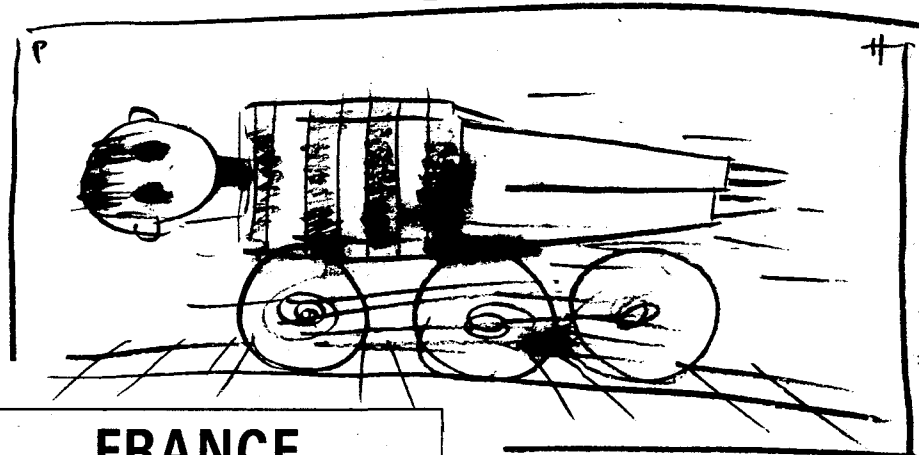
**High tech and "human error":** Rouvillois had been on the job only since last February. Getting rid of him enabled the new Socialist government to put one of its own people in charge of the nationalized railroads. But the policy held responsible by union leaders for the string of accidents dates back to another Socialist minister of transport, Paul Quilès, who in April 1985 signed a contract with the SNCF calling for elimination of 10,000 railroad jobs per year in order to make the railroads into a profit-making enterprise by the end of the decade.

Already a series of fatal accidents in the summer of 1985 had led to the resignation of another SNCF president and trials of individuals whose "human errors" were blamed for the accidents. But union spokesmen stress that the "human errors" are the product of a policy of putting balanced accounts ahead of safety.

At a protest meeting in the Gare de l'Est on August 8, the various unions vying to represent the SNCF's 213,000 employees (compared with 500,000 in 1939 and 254,400 in 1980) overcame their usual rivalry long enough to issue a joint demand for an end to the policy of job cutbacks. Labor spokesmen noted that since the 1985 plan, 144 passengers and 136 railroad workers have been killed. The accidents were not fate, they insisted, but the result of making safety secondary to competitiveness and financial return.

The labor representatives stressed the need to revive the concept of public service. Railroads have always been subsidized, and it has always been understood that passenger transport is a social need beneficial to the community as a whole, notably to its economic functioning. But gradually, in keeping with the trends pushed to extremes in Margaret Thatcher's Britain, the public service is being turned into a showcase for exportable technologies and a source of financial gain. The Communist daily *L'Humanité* suggested that if the interest rates the

## Wrecking French trains: the human grain of sand



FRANCE

SNCF is obliged to pay to the banks were simply lowered from 12 percent to 8 percent, this would provide funding for installations and training that could have prevented the Gare de l'Est accident and many others.

One government after another has promoted the high-speed TGV (*très grande vitesse*) train at the expense of local and suburban train service. With an eye to the European unified market scheduled for 1993, French planners want to make the TGV the center of the European railroad system of the future. Plans to link up to London via the channel tunnel are going full speed ahead. Negotiations are underway for a TGV to Brussels and Cologne. But, except for an expensive suburban link to the future EuroDisneyland in Marne-la-Vallée, high tech is bypassing the increasingly crowded suburban train network around Paris—more and more necessary as the working population is dispersed farther and farther from the city.

**Working on the railroad:** The grain of sand threatening the grandiose high-tech railroad system of the planners is the "human factor." The evolution of the French railroads is a human drama, part of the demoralization of the traditional world of work.

A traditional strength of the French railroads was the strong *esprit de corps*, the sense of solidarity of France's railroad workers, the *cheminots*. This spirit was strengthened during the period of the Nazi occupation, when the *cheminots* were the most effective part of the French Resistance. The self-image of the railroad employees as devoted public servants helped keep up the quality of service despite mediocre wages and hard conditions.

In an academic study made just before the 1985 series of accidents, SNCF safety specialist Jean-Georges Heintz noted the decline of the "cheminot spirit" and predicted a dramatic loss of security. The more complex a system, the more fragile it is, observed Heintz. The SNCF has been introducing more and more complicated techniques piecemeal. The diversified technologies coexist and are not mastered by the personnel.

Apparently in imitation of American management practices, the SNCF in the '70s began to calculate security as a budget item. This, says Heintz, was a sign of deteriorating security. Previously, the idea was that safety had no price: the goal was absolute security. Now it has a price, and is figured as a

mathematical probability.

Some security checks that used to be carried out every three months are now done every six months. This entails less preventive and more corrective maintenance; things are already going wrong and have to be fixed fast. Risks accumulate.

The union discourse is inappropriate to the scope of the problem, says Heintz. The Communist-led General Confederation of Labor (CGT) is stuck on quantitative demands for higher wages—which remain low nonetheless. The rival French Democratic Labor Confederation (CFDT) has tried to be more "qualitative" but has not managed to come to grips with the problem either.

Innovations tend to break down the old spirit of solidarity. In the SNCF, as everywhere else, technology is often brought in to replace human employees. Machines replace ticket-sellers, and in some small stations there is no human presence left. Short of grave professional error, nobody is fired from the SNCF, but people who retire are not replaced, and the constant reduction of personnel deprives those who are left of the old sense of group solidarity. Work is more lonely and stressful. But real wages for people actually running the trains are stagnating.

More or less deliberately, technical innovations widen the gap between the controlling administration and those who actually operate the trains. The SNCF has been shutting down its own schools that used to train employees up from the ranks, and takes its administrative personnel from outside.

**On the wrong track:** Implicitly, the technocrats who run France today consider forms of worker solidarity like the *esprit cheminot* archaic. "They talk about creating

**The grain of sand threatening France's high-tech railroad is the "human factor." The evolution of railroads is a human drama, part of the demoralization of the traditional world of work.**

a 'spirit of enterprise' that doesn't exist, while they are destroying the spirit that was there," complains Heintz.

The *esprit cheminot* was related to a class solidarity that could show up in industrial action against the bosses or in political attitudes that the ruling technocrats want to eliminate. The ideological mood of the '80s has amounted to an assault on the very identity of the working class, especially in countries like Britain and France, where the class hierarchy between administrative and blue-collar jobs tends to be more sharply maintained than elsewhere. The wave of anti-communism in France has contributed to a social devaluation of the working class as backward relics of the 19th century. This can only help demoralize people at work.

The discontent flared in the wildcat strikes that paralyzed French trains during the Christmas holidays of 1986.

Some innovations, such as replacement of telephone calls by computer messages, correspond to a judicial approach: they do not improve security, but if anything goes wrong there is a record to pinpoint who made the mistake. This is the basis of a system stressing individual rather than collective responsibility. It does not improve security but has a political and ideological purpose: to replace the old solidarity among railroad workers with the individualism believed to favor the "spirit of enterprise."

The more tangible result is the accelerated negation of the "human factor." In the beginning of industrialization, the human factor was a positive force that overcame obstacles. Now it is the grain of sand in the mechanism.

Heintz and a group of colleagues suggest that the current stress on the "human factor" as sufficient explanation for accidents is a way of masking a grave historical rupture in contemporary social organization—and not only in public transport. The search for the ever-erring "human factor" responsible for an accident can never get to the real underlying causes, which have to do with choices to use technology in ways that radically disrupt social relations.

The prevailing current ideology that "we are living in times of high risk" is a veil of fatality covering these political choices.

**The human scapegoat:** The growth of mass unemployment—the logical consequence of using technology to cut back jobs—contributes to a social climate that also undermines the spirit of public service. In the sequence of events leading to the fatal June 27 accident at the Gare de Lyon, the engineer had lost 20 minutes when an unidentified passenger stopped the train by pulling the emergency brake. Something went wrong in resetting the brakes. Pulling the emergency brakes has become such a frequent form of behavioral vandalism on the suburban lines that the SNCF is taking them out of the trains.

The string of errors has shown the inadequacy of sending lone engineers out in a semi-hostile world as potential "human errors." There is growing recognition of the need to design security systems that support the error-prone human rather than merely designating him as scapegoat. The philosophy of competitive individualism is not adequate or appropriate for something like public transport in particular, or in general for the much-heralded service society of the future.



By Diana Johnstone

IN A GESTURE MEANT TO PROMOTE THE "NEW period in Soviet-German relations," the Soviet Union recently cut short 20-year-old West German amateur pilot Mathias Rust's four-year prison sentence for his unauthorized May 1987 flight to Red Square. The Soviets then sent Rust home in a Luft-hansa Airbus.

Paradoxically, the Airbus could do far more damage to these promising relations than Mathias Rust in his Cessna.

Rust's amateur flight from Hamburg to Red Square exposed the vulnerability of a vast, overarmed superpower to small aerial intrusions. The need to keep subsidizing Airbus may be leading to a German military-industrial complex producing weapons that could make that vulnerability seem much less theoretical.

Plans are underway for Daimler-Benz, manufacturer of Mercedes-Benz automobiles and already West Germany's largest military contractor, to take over West Germany's foremost aerospace company, Messerschmitt-Bölkow-Blohm (MBB) this fall. The new industrial colossus would control most West German military production and 3.7 percent of the Federal Republic of Germany's gross domestic product, according to figures in the weekly *Der Spiegel*.

The corporate concentration began three years ago, when Daimler-Benz acquired a controlling 65 percent of the aviation firm Dornier, manufacturer of the Alpha Jet. The auto firm also acquired 56 percent of the century-old electrical giant AEG and 100 percent of the military motor and turbine manufacturer MTU.

If the merger with MBB goes through, German industry will have rebuilt the very sort of concentrated power that the Allies deliberately broke up after World War II. That break-up was based on the grounds that big war industries were a factor in German militarism and had supported Hitler, whose ideology provided a justification for a government-financed arms buildup that brought German industry out of the depression.

Certainly, the circumstances and motivations of the current concentration seem very different. The head of Daimler-Benz, Edzard Reuter, is a Social Democrat and partisan of detente, a modern manager rather than a chauvinistic German baron of industry. The merger is justified in the name of "Europe" and as a way to sustain European civilian production, starting with the civilian transport plane, the Airbus.

**The subsidies game:** Airbus is the ostensible reason why the Bonn government has been pushing Daimler-Benz to take over MBB. This requires a bit of explaining.

Airbus is the only major joint European industrial venture aimed at the civilian rather than military market. The French and Germans each control 38 percent of the Airbus venture, British Aerospace 20 percent with the crumbs left for Spain. In 20 years, Airbus has managed to capture about 10 percent of the world civilian aircraft market, a small crack in the monopoly enjoyed by American companies in general and Boeing in particular, which alone takes some 70 percent of the world market.

Since the original 1967 agreement among Germany, France and Britain to develop a civilian aviation industry, the European governments have subsidized research and development. Constant American complaints that such subsidies are "unfair" do not impress the Europeans. Everyone knows that



EUROPE

In 20 years Airbus has managed to capture about 10 percent of the world civilian aircraft market.

## Rebuilding the German military-industrial base

the U.S. has its own ways of subsidizing, and that Boeing's dominance is the result of years of research and development financed by billions of dollars in Pentagon contracts.

However, the Bonn government, eccentrically faithful to free market tenets and obsessed with balanced budgets, is uncomfortable with the long-term subsidization of Airbus.

In Germany, Airbus is Franz-Josef Strauss' baby. The conservative Bavarian leader and "German Gaullist" has always sought a European aerospace industry independent of the Americans. Strauss heads the supervisory board of Airbus Industrie GmbH, the subsidiary of MBB that makes the German share of the Airbus. The ownership of MBB itself is mixed public and private, with majority shares split between Strauss' Bavaria and the northern German city-states of Bremen and Hamburg.

Strauss is now 72 and would like to be sure that MBB and Airbus will be taken care of after he retires.

The West German share of development costs has risen from an estimated 1.65 billion marks to 2.65 billion. At first, it was promised that Airbus would break even and start to reimburse the government with the sale of 360 aircraft. Now more than 400 have been sold, and the break-even point has been upped to 860. Bonn sees little chance of getting its research-and-development money back. On the contrary, development of new models will require further subsidies.

Germans complain that the French, more interested in prestige than in profit, have underpriced the planes. The prices—in dollars—look as weak as the German mark is strong.

**Making a monopoly:** Subsidies are arguably a small price to pay for two major benefits: the preservation of European know-how (which without industrial outlets would

join the "brain drain" to the U.S.) and avoidance of an American monopoly that could enable Boeing to set prices as high as it liked. In West Germany, however, the need to subsidize Airbus runs up against free-market doctrine and the demand for a balanced budget. The minister of the economy, Martin Bangemann, wants Daimler-Benz to take over MBB as part of a deal to get Airbus subsidies off Bonn's budget and in order to submit Airbus to the cost-control of healthy private management.

The paradox, stressed by *Der Spiegel*, is that Bangemann, who as chairman of the Free Democratic Party is the country's leading champion of the free market economy, is thereby sponsoring creation of a mammoth arms monopoly. Bangemann is ready to use government support to get around antitrust objections to the merger.

Airbus is the reason for the merger, according to Alfred Herrhausen, the new head of the Deutsche Bank, who is also president of the supervisory board of Daimler-Benz. The Deutsche Bank is Daimler-Benz' largest stockholder, with 28 percent, and its support for the merger can mean that the bank counts on a strengthened military-industrial complex to provide assured profits in the years ahead.

In fact, it is hard to escape the suspicion that Airbus is only the innocuous excuse for a more fundamental shift in German industrial policy toward greater use of an American-style military-industrial complex to subsidize high-technology development.

Interviewed by *Der Spiegel*, Herrhausen admitted that the merger with MBB and resulting emergence of a German military-industrial giant could hurt the Mercedes image on the world market. Thus he prefers the term "defense corporation" to the term "arms corporation." Herrhausen justified the merger by the need for a certain "critical mass" in order to compete in the eventual "trilateral world" of Europe, the U.S. and

Japan. "When you want to compete successfully, then you must struggle to get such dimensions, even against conventional public opinion such as expressed in rulings of the cartel office and the monopoly commission."

The excuse for flouting the spirit and eventually the letter of antitrust law is the higher good: Europe. "The real question is Europe," claimed Herrhausen. "We must try to create a European Boeing." For the moment, there is no common European corporate law, so each country in the European Community must set up its own giant to be ready for the massive fusion into European Boeings and other monsters in the 1990s, the banker argued.

**High-flying costs:** The first-stage booster to a European military-industrial complex able to compete with the Pentagon in cost overruns, wasted money and free rides for private industry is the project for a European Fighter Aircraft for the mid-'90s, the EFA-90. West Germany, Britain, Italy and Spain are supposed to develop the EFA-90 to replace the F-4 Phantom jet, with West Germany paying a third of the costs. This means, to start with, 16.5 billion marks for MBB and the aviation firm Dornier—a good wedding present for the new Daimler-Benz-Dornier-MBB conglomerate. But critic Ralph Giordano notes that the total costs of an earlier joint venture, the Tornado jet program, are already twice their original estimates. There is no reason for the EFA-90, which is not even a prototype yet, to lag behind.

As with other joint projects, the various countries do not see eye to eye on the eventual military capabilities of the projected fighter plane. But this hardly seems to matter. MBB manager Hanns Arnt Vogels, who is also president of the German aerospace industry federation, maintains that: "The fighter aircraft of the future is necessary not only for military reasons. The decision to go ahead with this project is also the indispensable insurance for the existence of the European aviation and space industry into the next century."

Once again, "Europe" is the sacred cause. Certainly, European patriotism is as acceptable these days as German patriotism is not. But Hanns Arnt Vogels can play on more than one register. He has also argued that

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## Bush's bash: grand old problems and some embarrassing new ones

By John B. Judis

NEW ORLEANS

**V**ICE PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH CAME TO the Republican convention here with two important, but potentially contradictory, tasks: to unify the Republicans behind his candidacy and to gain the upper hand on his Democratic opponent, Gov. Michael Dukakis. But he didn't fully succeed in uniting the party and, while he got the expected post-convention boost in the polls, he failed to set the political agenda for the fall campaign.

Bush's failure was most apparent on the convention's last night. He gave a stirring acceptance speech—superior in eloquence, if not delivery, to his rival's speech in Atlanta. Yet on ABC's late night news show *Nightline* the topic was not Bush's speech, but the military record of his running mate, Indiana Sen. Dan Quayle.

Bush's performance stilled doubts about whether he could deliver an effective speech. But his tilt rightward and his choice of Quayle raised questions about his judgment and his political courage that will dog him throughout the fall campaign.

**Rising moderates:** In dealing with the different Republican Party factions, Bush acted as if the party had not changed from 1980, when the Republican far right was on the rise and moderates had been effectively mar-

ginalized. But in 1988 the Republican right is far weaker and Republican moderates are the most rapidly growing group in the party.

At the 1980 Republican convention in Detroit, the two most important groups were traditional conservatives like Texas' John Tower, who dated their politics from Sen. Barry Goldwater's 1964 presidential nomination, and "new right" conservatives like Paul Weyrich and John "Terry" Dolan, many of whom had been heavily influenced by George Wallace's independent candidacy in 1968. At the 1980 convention Republican moderates, many of whom backed Rep. John Anderson's candidacy, were treated like crypto-Democrats.

The difference in the groups was evident in the kind of receptions they held at the time. The conservative Young Americans for Freedom rented a large storefront in Detroit and threw a lavish party for the Republicans; the moderate Ripon Society, founded to wrest the party away from the Goldwater conservatives, operated out of a hotel room, where its single representative sat on an unmade bed giving interviews to a few reporters.

This year Republican conservatives remained an important force at the convention, but some of them, like South Carolina Gov. Carroll Campbell, have begun to embrace the same kind of state economic initiatives as Southern Democratic governors. On

the other hand, the new right, who call themselves "movement conservatives," have become an embattled splinter. Some of the foremost organizations, such as Dolan's National Conservative Political Action Committee (NCPAC) are defunct. North Carolina Sen. Jesse Helms didn't even bother to come, leaving leadership of the movement conservatives to New Hampshire Sen. Gordon Humphrey. When Humphrey's Coalition for a Winning Ticket called a press conference to

**To unite the party for the November 8 election, George Bush had to make many concessions to its right wing, but the vice president went far beyond what was required.**

threaten Bush if he did not choose a suitably conservative vice president, only a handful of reporters showed up.

In 1980 the new right commanded the allegiance of the newly organized right-wing evangelicals, but in 1988 the evangelicals were divided among Humphrey's coalition,

Rev. Pat Robertson's delegates (who didn't mingle with the new right conservatives, most of whom had backed Rep. Jack Kemp) and Bush supporters like Rev. Jerry Falwell. In New Orleans Robertson had fewer than 100 delegates (the exact total remained unclear), about the number that Anderson had in 1980.

By contrast, Republican moderates boasted several of the party's upcoming leaders, including New Jersey Gov. Thomas Kean, U.S. Attorney General Richard Thornburgh and Kansas Sen. Nancy Kassebaum. The Ripon Society, chaired by Iowa Rep. Jim Leach, held a packed reception at the Omni Royal Hotel. And Republican feminists engaged a standing-room-only workshop in the same room where Humphrey's coalition had met. According to one poll, 35 percent of the delegates identified themselves as moderates—a significant percentage in that many young Republicans call themselves "conservatives," but identify with the moderates on social and constitutional issues.

Moderate Republicans such as Kean, Leach or Connecticut Rep. Nancy Johnson do not differ significantly from moderate Democrats. In New Jersey, for instance, Kean's politics of inclusion has attracted AFL-CIO and minority support. In 1980 these types of Republicans appeared to represent a leftover from the Rockefeller Republicans who had modelled themselves on New Deal Democrats. But in 1988 they have re-emerged as an important force in the party and as a sign of growing convergence in American politics between Democrats and Republicans. In New Orleans, however, they were shielded from public view, partly because of their own political gentility and also



because of Bush's decision to appease the right.

**Rightward tilt:** Bush is a political hybrid. Like his father, former Wall Street banker and Connecticut Sen. Prescott Bush, George Bush is a Yankee Republican, pro-business but also imbued with a sense of *noblesse oblige* toward the less fortunate. However, Bush, who migrated from Yale to the Texas oil lands in 1948 and eventually became a Houston congressman, also embodies the kind of *nouveaux riches* individualism ("If I made it, you can make it") that has characterized Sunbelt Republicanism. He has ties to both Goldwater conservatives (he was a Goldwater delegate in 1964) and the Ripon Republicans (Ripon's Leach chairs Bush's campaign in Iowa).

But Bush has always been distrusted by new right conservatives and evangelicals who sense in him both social disdain and Yankee cosmopolitanism. Bush has responded by keeping the right out of his campaign staff, while trying to appease it in public.

Initially the Bush campaign floated the names of several moderates as vice-presidential possibilities, including Kean and Illinois Gov. James Thompson. Bush was also said to favor pro-choice Wyoming Sen. Alan Simpson. But when the right protested, Bush withdrew the names from consideration and eventually chose someone closely identified with the new right.

It helped give Quayle his start in politics. His 1976 campaign was one of the first successful projects of Paul Weyrich's Free Congress Research and Education Foundation, and his 1980 victory over Indiana Sen. Birch Bayh was significantly aided by NCPAC's independent campaign. As a senator, Quayle has regularly championed new right causes from anti-abortion to opposing the INF treaty.

Bush also tilted right in appeasing Robertson. In key battles over whether pro-Bush or pro-Robertson state delegations would vote at the convention, Bush yielded to Robertson. After Bush won the primary in Georgia, the pro-Bush state committee appointed one delegation and a rump pro-Robertson convention selected another. To the distress of Bush's supporters in the state, his national operatives worked out a compromise giving Robertson a 27-to-21 advantage.

According to Robertson, Bush campaign operatives also gave evangelicals control over several platform planks, including that on abortion. As a result, Robertson boasted to his delegates in a closed-door meeting that the 1988 platform was "even more conservative" than the 1980 and 1984 documents (see accompanying story). The platform endorses the Human Life Amendment, which makes fetuses into legal persons and leaves any mother who aborts a fetus open to civil suits and criminal prosecution. It also makes opposition to abortion a litmus test in choosing judges. It promises federal funds for programs that counsel abstinence to teenagers, and it calls for preventing school and other programs from dispensing contraceptives without parental consent. To prevent AIDS, it counsels only sexual abstinence.

Bush's role in the GOP abortion debate sharply contrasts with Dukakis' in the debate over taxes and military spending. Dukakis did not accept any platform planks that he did not agree with, but Bush accepted the Robertson and National Right to Life Com-



In shorts: the Bush campaign is off and running...or are they standing still?

mittee's absolute opposition to abortion in spite of the fact that he advocates the right to abortion in the case of rape or incest. When Rep. Johnson argued in the platform hearings for Bush's position, Bush's representative on the platform committee, New Hampshire Gov. John Sununu, indicated that

Bush wanted the evangelicals' absolute ban in the platform. Bush also assured the National Right to Life Committee that as president he would sign legislation banning all abortions.

He also permitted the platform committee to diverge from his own view of how soon

the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) could be deployed. The committee took Bush's draft, which promised deployment "as technologies permit," removed any qualification and substituted a pledge for "rapid and certain deployment."

*Continued on following page*

## Feminists and evangelicals: the movers and the shakers

The two groups that exhibited the most political energy at the Republican convention were feminists and evangelicals, groups that have virtually nothing in common politically.

Several hundred women attended a workshop sponsored by the National Women's Political Caucus, whose director, Irene Navidad, is a Republican. The workshop was chaired by former chair of the Republican National Committee, Mary Louise Smith, and included consultants Linda DiVall and Tanya Melich, and House members Nancy Johnson and Bill Green.

Feminist Republicans argued that the gender gap is real and that Republicans must be prepared to do something about it. Republicans, DiVall contended, have to learn to address the "new family issues" like "day-care, quality of education and long-term health care." They also have to stop pandering to right-wing evangelicals. "The platform has a position on abortion that is unacceptable to women, even those who are anti-choice," Melich said. The feminists pointed out that in 1986 the only Republican senator who didn't suffer a gender gap was pro-choice Sen. Robert Packwood from Oregon.

Most Republican feminists are political moderates who identify with the moderate Ripon Society and would like to see someone like Gov. Tom Kean leading the party. At the Ripon reception, Sherry Nemmers, secretary of the Maine Republican Party, told *In These Times* what happened

when a state party committee interviewed a candidate for director. "I have to tell you that I am pro-choice," she told us. There wasn't a stir. Then she said, 'I also have to tell you that I am against funding the contras.' Again, nobody stirred, because everybody agreed with her."

The evangelicals also have their own agenda for the Republican Party. At a closed-door meeting on the convention's first day—overheard through a crack in a side door by this reporter—Robertson told his delegates that they "should do everything they can to elect George Bush." But he also told them that they should continue taking over state parties. "If Bush doesn't win, we want to see something happen in 1992," Robertson said. "If he does win, I'll still be a young man like Ronald Reagan in 1996."

Robertson explained to his delegates that he had gotten a prime-time spot for his address and significant concessions on the platform from Bush. "What they've done is make it more conservative than in 1984," Robertson said. He told the delegates that his strategy was to "appear a generous loser."

Robertson's strategy in the Republican Party is very similar to Jackson's in the Democratic Party. But they occupy different political positions in their parties. Both the strength and limitation of Jackson's movement is in its leader. Many, if not most, of Jackson's ideas are shared by his political rivals; the strength and limitation of Robertson's movement

is in its ideas. Its *Weltanschauung* is fundamentally different from that of most other Republicans.

Robertson's followers exhibit the agony and the ecstasy of the revival tent. They believe that America is going downhill and they want to save it from perdition. Most other Republicans from conservatives like Orrin Hatch to moderates like Nancy Johnson have the booster mentality of the Jaycees or the public-relations firm. They believe things are pretty good, if not fine, and will only get better. "America is not in decline; America is a rising nation," Bush proclaimed in his acceptance speech.

Robertson and his followers regard issues like abortion and school prayer as the focal points of politics. Most Republicans see these issues as secondary to the economy and foreign policy. And those feminists who share Robertson's concern with abortion take the opposite position that he does.

These differences do not deter Robertson or his followers. On the night of Tuesday, August 16, Robertson announced that he was releasing his delegates to vote for Bush, and as he spoke his delegates waved "Robertson for Bush" signs in the crowd. But the signs were written in such a way—with the "for" barely perceptible and "Robertson" looming larger than "Bush"—that they looked like they were advertising a ticket of Robertson for president and Bush for vice president.

—J.B.J.



Continued from preceding page

Bush's main gesture toward the moderates was to make Kean the convention's keynote speaker. But he allowed Robertson to make his speech after Kean's on prime-time television. Although Kean balked at the Bush campaign's attempt to write his speech for him, he still ended up giving the kind of narrow, Democrat-bashing speech that they had hoped for. It seemed that Kean, following Bush's lead, wanted to appear more right-wing than the right.

To unite the party for the November election, Bush had to make concessions to its right wing, but he went far beyond what was required. He was moved in part by an increasingly obsolete view of the Republican Party. Since 1962, when Richard Nixon lost the California governor's race after a bruising primary against a conservative opponent, leading Republicans have believed that they can't win without appeasing the right wing. But both the nature of the party and the nature of the right have changed since then. Bush might have had to appease modern conservatives like Campbell, but he did

not have to appease the splintered forces of Humphrey, Helms and Weyrich.

**Bush lite:** Bush's choice of Quayle also raised questions about his political judgment. In recent decades presidential candidates have been helped by vice presidential nominees who complemented them politically, socially and regionally and who were of equal presidential stature. John Kennedy's choice of Lyndon Johnson in 1960, Jimmy Carter's choice of Walter Mondale in 1976 and Reagan's choice of Bush in 1980 significantly enhanced these presidential candidates' chances. Bush's obvious choice was Kansas Sen. Robert Dole, the runner-up in the primary elections, strong in the Midwest where Bush is weak and of equal stature to Bush himself. Bush's campaign chairman Jim Baker reportedly favored Dole.

But Bush chose a largely unknown Indiana senator instead. In explaining Bush's choice, his operatives gave great weight to Quayle's appeal to women (largely, it seems, because of his resemblance to Robert Redford) and his generational appeal (largely, it seems, based on his age). With a gender gap as large

as 21 percent favoring Dukakis, the Bush campaign is clearly worried about the women's vote. Yet the main reason Bush chose Quayle over Dole seems to have been his preference for congeniality and subservience in a running mate.

In choosing Quayle, Bush put his own "comfort level" above his chances in November and the requirements of vice-presidential office. Vice presidents have already had to succeed presidents five times this century, and Quayle does not appear qualified to succeed Bush if Bush were to die or resign his office. Termed "Bush lite," Quayle has been

more concerned with constituent service than drafting bills. On the Armed Services Committee, he most clearly resembles Illinois Democrat Alan Dixon, who appears more concerned with local defense contractors and military bases than with geopolitical strategy. Not a single major piece of legislation bears Quayle's name.

His National Guard experience, combined with his upper class upbringing, also gives the Republicans a ticket that evokes the country club rather than the neighborhood pub. With Quayle as a running mate, Bush will have an even harder time gaining the

## 15,000 media fish jump for a few GOP crumbs

Until he travelled to the July Democratic convention, Ronnie Virgets was a metro columnist for the New Orleans Times-Picayune. Virgets was fired in Atlanta after clashing with superiors over an unflattering column about the national press corps' convention coverage (see In These Times, July 17). Figuring that he would have a unique perspective on press sycophancy, we asked Virgets to take a look at the 15,000 or so media representatives who mobbed the GOP convention.

By Ronnie Virgets

NEW ORLEANS

THE PEDESTRIAN BELTWAY AROUND THE Louisiana Superdome is filled with paraphernalia that would give blanch to a Basra bazaar operator or even Shelley Winters. There's junk jewelry, boxer shorts with a GOP elephant trunk protruding from the fly and bumper stickers that urge "Don't do Du-Ca-Ca on the U.S."

Maybe it's the effect of too many freebie pizza slices at the Bell South media hospitality suite (the place is usually jammed), but there is a momentary vision of George Bush, knotted cord in hand, advancing on these merchants like Jesus bearing down on the money-changers, scattering them through the portals of the Superdome.

Now.

By the pickle-relish tray at one of the hot-dog stands, an alternate delegate from Oklahoma is explaining to a pair of slow studies why George Bush made the strategic switch of announcing the vice-presidential choice on Tuesday instead of Thursday.

"With Dan Quayle's name recognition, they had to get him on national TV two nights," the Oklahoman says. "You listen to the platform speakers. They mention his name 300 times tonight."

**Deference all around:** That the current level of mutual manipulation. Like doctors and lawyers on another corner of the Amer-

ican field, the media and the political community are locked in a struggle for preeminence. And like a relationship ancient and loveless, where neither likes the other very much, both know all the deceits necessary to get what they want.

Another sample: the week before the convention, word flutters through the newsroom of the New Orleans Times-Picayune: the reigning vice president is coming.

Clean off those desktops. This is the sort of respectability the paper's been hoping for, spent a quarter-million in newsroom refurbishing on.

So here's George Bush coming down the aisle, and at each desk is a wingtip being rubbed shiny on the back of an opposite leg. The paper's upper management rises like a tide of blue Oxford shirts to greet the visitor. Press and politico, everyone very deferential to everyone else.

Later, metro editor Jim Amass will tell a lunch-table crowd that Bush has promised to hold overhead a copy of the Times-Picayune on the way to the podium for his acceptance speech. "He signed a contract with us," Amass says.

At the convention, Bush does no such thing. Perhaps it is, as H.L. Mencken suggested long ago: "The journalist can no more see himself realistically than a bishop can see himself realistically."

**Newsmakers making news:** And you thought that Vanity Fair photographer Jill Krementz tagging after NBC's Connie Chung was a good example of newspeople incestuously becoming news?

This might be a better one. The day before the convention's official opening, Garland Robinette, news anchor for CBS New Orleans affiliate, had his credentials lifted by Superdome security because he happened to have a pistol in his briefcase.

On the next night's newscast, the dejected Robinette told with Carl Rowan, chair of the New Orleans Convention, that his



Flat cat George Bush stalks the New Orleans Republican convention.

personal handgun was in his briefcase and suggested that David Letterman have him on to do "stupid anchor tricks."

But there was much scuttlebutt suggesting that more than nincompoopery was involved. The unofficial version was that Robinette hoped to smuggle his gat into the hall and then lead off his next telecast with "And you thought convention security was tight..."

And what is the fuel for such folly? The standard and charitable answer from those cranking out cookie-cutter copy from the convention is that these coronations produce 15,000 dogs fighting over one bone, scratching for a little controversy where there is even less.

So these are the times when politicians

try reporters' souls. GOP convention manager Fred Malek asked the networks to show more minorities on the floor. There was some grumbling, but certain compliance: every time the podium luminary mentioned "Lincoln" or "inclusion," the cameras would bring up the closeup of a black face.

How do the big media stars handle these demeaning moments? Why, through a linkage of mechanical solidarity with the big political stars—and gobs of peacock behavior—is how. Take Diane Sawyer sweeping along the convention floor, moving around the room like bulletstrikes on a sandhill. Pee-o-w! Pee-o-w! Pee-o-w! She's already vamped the pages of Vanity Fair, and she's a force of nature, pushing toward President Reagan at the podium with a mindless



# CAMPAIN '88

votes of Reagan Democrats. And anyone who believes that good looks are the key to the women's vote should recall that in 1960 Nixon, with his simian jaw, shifty eyes and five-o'clock shadow, bested Kennedy among women.

**Compatibility over capability:** Bush's cave-in to the right on the platform and his selection of Quayle were ill-considered but not surprising. Throughout his career he has displayed a kind of political cowardice. When serving as chairman of the Republican National Committee during Watergate, Bush defended Nixon well after other prominent Republicans, including New York Sen. James Buckley, had called for Nixon's resignation.

Then in 1976, when Bush was director of the CIA, he acceded to right-wing pressure—resisted by Bush's CIA predecessor William Colby—to appoint an outside team of conservative ideologues to second-guess the agency's own estimates of Soviet military strength and intentions. Predictably, the right-wing "B team" produced a report claiming Soviet military superiority and Soviet plans to win a nuclear war. In December

1976, B team members leaked their secret report to the media, and it became an important exhibit in the right's case against Carter administration arms control efforts.

Later, as Reagan's vice president, Bush remained silent when Secretary of State George Shultz and Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger protested the administration's plan to trade arms for hostages with Iran.

Bush subsequently claimed to have been appalled by Watergate, betrayed by the B team and hesitant about the arms-for-hostages deal. But in each case Bush failed to stand up effectively for his own convictions. In New Orleans, when seeking to unite the party, Bush behaved in the same manner, allowing the convention to adopt platform provisions that contradicted his own stated positions.

Bush also has a history of choosing ill-qualified but congenial subordinates. When he was CIA director he appointed Henry Knoche, who was known around Washington more for his tennis game than his expertise in intelligence, as his deputy. One senior in-

telligence official told the *Washington Post* about Bush's appointments, "He picks people he would like to associate with socially."

**Finest hour:** In his acceptance speech on Thursday night, Bush temporarily rebounded from his disastrous choice of Quayle. Credit for the speech's success goes to Peggy Noonan, who wrote news for Dan Rather and later speeches for Reagan. From 1984 to 1986, Noonan penned some of Reagan's most memorable speeches, including the D-Day address in Normandy. Almost alone among speechwriters, she brings to her writing an ear honed by literature and a passing appreciation of philosophical distinctions.

In the convention speech, Noonan tackled head-on the problem that Bush faces politically. Bush often seems to embody the worst of the Yankee patrician and Texas individualist; he appears to be a rich, selfish Texan whose wealth was based on his family connections. But Noonan synthesized Bush's *noblesse oblige* and moderate Republicanism with his Texas individualism.

Bush extolled the economic progress achieved in the Reagan years, but then expressed his own sense of patrician responsibility for the poor:

*But let's be frank. Things aren't perfect in this country. There are people who haven't tasted the fruits of the expansion. I've talked to farmers about bills they can't pay, and I've been to the factories that feel the strain of change. And I've seen urban children who play amidst the shattered glass and shattered lives. And there are the homeless.... They're there, and we have to help them.*

*But what we must remember, if we're to be responsible and compassionate, is that economic growth is the key to our endeavors.*

*I want growth that stays, that broadens, that touches, finally, all Americans, from the hollows of Kentucky to the sunlit streets of Denver, from the suburbs of Chicago to the broad avenues of New York, from the oil fields of Oklahoma to the farms of the Great Plains.*

Drawing on the Catholic doctrine of subsidiarity, Noonan provided Bush with a philosophy of government that was limited but that did not create an opposition between government and society. In his speech, Bush portrayed society as a set of concentric circles with the individual at "the bright center," and with family, community, town, church, school, county and state "radiating out from" the individual, "each doing only what it does well and no more."

"Does government have a place?" Bush asked. "Yes, government is part of the nation of communities, not the whole, just a part."

Bush described himself not as a reluctant recruit from the private sector, but as a man imbued with a high sense of public service. And echoing again his Yankee upbringing, he rejected the achievement of wealth as an end in itself. "Prosperity has a purpose. It is to allow us to pursue 'the better angels,' to give us time to think and grow. Prosperity with a purpose means taking your idealism and making it concrete by certain acts of goodness."

In his speech, Bush also previewed the kind of gutter politics that will likely dominate the fall campaign: abortion, the death penalty, furloughed murderers and Dukakis' veto of a bill to require Massachusetts' teachers to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Bush evoked Americans' imperial nostalgia,

promising to make the 21st century another "American century."

But Bush conspicuously excluded the contrasts from the American century and resisted the temptation to court the racist backlash through linking Dukakis to Jesse Jackson. If he appealed brazenly for any group's support, it was not the support of the political right but of moderate women. "I want a kinder and gentler nation," Bush declared. In all, Bush's speech owed more to Connecticut than to Texas, to Ripon Republicanism than to Reagan conservatism. Its program and philosophy were the expression of a political sensibility not dramatically different from Dukakis'.

Yet what remains worrisome about Bush is not so much his innate sensibility as his character and political courage. His instincts might be moderate, but if his career and his behavior at the convention are any indication, Bush could become even more susceptible to right-wing pressure than Reagan. In this respect, he and Dukakis remain miles apart, and a Dukakis victory remains a high priority for anyone concerned about equitable economic growth, a civil libertarian court and an easing of Cold War tensions.

**Fall prospects:** Bush did not improve his November prospects by nominating Quayle. Indeed, if further revelations occur, Quayle could put Bush in an impossible position, torn between retaining Quayle and thereby allowing the campaign to be dominated by his disabilities or dropping Quayle and admitting that he erred. But assuming that Bush can eventually put Quayle behind him, he should still be rated a very slight favorite in the November election.

Bush can take advantage of his own vice-presidential status and his association with Reagan, the most popular president since Dwight Eisenhower. Both Vice President Nixon in 1960 and Vice President Hubert Humphrey in 1968 received a last-minute boost in the polls, attributable largely to their office. And neither Nixon nor Humphrey received the kind of enthusiastic support from his president that Reagan gave to Bush during the convention.

Bush also benefits from the lack of substantive issues in the campaign. The lowest unemployment rate in a decade and improved U.S.-Soviet relations have deprived Dukakis of a national issue on which to base his campaign. Dukakis is already being forced to make Bush's character and judgment the issue. This is a game that Bush's campaign can play, too.

If Bush can be attacked for his privileged birth (born with "a silver foot in his mouth"), Dukakis is vulnerable to a negative campaign focusing on school prayer, the death penalty and prison furloughs—issues that resonate with Reagan Democrats in the South and ethnic North. The Bush campaign appears especially eager to exploit the case of Willie Horton, a black convicted murderer who raped a white woman when he was on furlough from a Massachusetts prison.

Of course, Bush has repeatedly displayed a capacity for turning success into failure and victory into defeat. In New Hampshire in February 1980, he blew a decisive lead over presidential rival Reagan. At the New Orleans convention, he lost an opportunity to set the fall agenda by choosing a patently unqualified running mate. If Bush bags another "Quayle" before election day, he will be a dead duck.

liquidity to match his own.

"Mister President! Mister President! Who would you pick as George Bush's running mate?"

Reagan hesitates for just an instant. Was it what Hunter Thompson called "guilt-driven energy" that forced that question to her lips? My God, can she expect anything but a vacuous answer?

Come on, Mister President, you find yourself whispering to yourself. Knock Ms. Sawyer's garters clean off her body. All you have to say is, "Frankly, Diane, I'd pick Lloyd Bentsen. He's sort of a generic vice-president type, isn't he? I'd just say, 'Lloyd, you've got to make up your mind right now which ticket you want to be on in November.'"

Not in our lifetimes. "Well, Diane," the president says, "you know that George Bush is the nominee now," etc.

**Nothing for something:** For whom do such silly bells toll? For thee and me in front of our TV. George Will has the temerity to suggest that such staged media spectacles are beneficial to the electorate, a tip-off to how well the candidate can arrange things.

Somewhere out in space for all this artificial ritual are the delegates themselves, standing by like box-lunch extras in a Spielberg epic.

A few generalizations about them. Andy Rooney could come up with a hundred. Like their candidates, most would seem to be strangers to the hard dollar. (Against no other non-monarchist political party on earth could millionaires Dukakis and Bentsen portray themselves as "the poor man's" candidates.) Most of them, even the 80 black delegates, would seem comfortable at any gathering of Anglophiles. And, like Sen. Quayle, most appear proficient at rattling sabers as long as other people's sons have to carry them.

So they sit for reporters grinning grins full of Rotarian values, grins with the nervous acknowledgement that somewhat off-stage there are people and practices beyond concern or discernment. Does anyone know which? Does it make any difference?

Louis Dunbar, who drives one of those mule-hauled tourist buggies in the French Quarter, described the Republican delegates like this for the *Boston Herald's* Peter Gel-

zini:

"Snoo-ty! Snoo-ty! Snoo-ty!... Tell ya, they 'bout the cheapest sumbitches I ever seen down here."

**The big catch:** The torque was tightening in the ramp leading to Section 333 of the Superdome loge level.

As soon as pro-choice Gov. Thomas Kean rose to give the keynote address, a dozen or so college-age kids in Section 333 stood up, unfurled their banners and started chanting, "Baby killer!" Like trout rising to evening flies, the media came running with their Betacams and microphones. The ramp entrance was getting crowded and ugly, especially when the Cable News Network cameraman's long aerial whiplashed a couple of Republican faces. A security man caught him by the arm.

"Er, you got a problem?" the cameraman demanded. "I'm going to work here."

Security didn't know what to do about the media bullying their way into the fray, and didn't know what to do about the protesters because the media was there. A lot of nearby Republicans didn't know what to do either. They too are against abortion, but jeez....

"You're showing the world we're in discord!" they shouted at the protesters. "Your First Amendment rights are for the sidewalk outside!"

The cameramen kept shooting and as long as they did, the protesters kept shouting, "Abortion is murder! They're using your taxes to murder future Republicans!"

When Kean's speech was over, the young protesters came down. A half-dozen uniformed cops got around three of the loudest and hustled them out of the Superdome. There, the cops made them surrender their convention credentials. The kids turned away, flushed but happy.

"Did you see the ABC camera? They were leaning way over the rail right by us. They got us good," said Janine Alvitre of Provo, Utah.

"We got a million bucks of publicity," said Denver Pilcher of Sacramento, Calif. "I don't know how we'd get more."

"Hey," said Jim Bieser of Orange County, Calif. "We'd hafta shoot somebody."

Okay, Jim. There's this anchorman named Garland Robinette and... □



# EDITORIAL



**IN THESE TIMES**  
 "...with liberty and justice for all"

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## The Quayle-Bush team: a near-perfect match

The Republican Party's revival meeting of militarists and jingoists in New Orleans almost worked. The theme of George Bush's acceptance speech was that, like the 20th century, the 21st "will be another American century." With Michael Dukakis leaning over backward to appear acceptable to the Reaganites, there is little chance that he will challenge Bush on what this actually might mean for the majority of Americans, much less the people of the rest of the world.

So, having seized this high ground, Bush might well have succeeded in convincing people that in talking about his "mission" to "build a better America" he shared their ideas of what a better America might be. But while he judiciously left that to the public's imagination, he did use the idea effectively in attacking Dukakis' most glaring weakness. "Some say this isn't an election about ideology," but about competence, Bush said. But competence "is a narrow ideal." It "makes the trains run on time but doesn't know where they're going. Competence is the creed of the technocrat who makes the gears mesh but doesn't for a second understand the magic of the machine." This was heady stuff that spoke to people across the political spectrum about Dukakis' shortcomings. It was a brilliant attack, given the Democratic candidate's abject fear of social or political principles.

But, as it turned out, it was too late. For Bush's actions had already spoken louder than his words—and they reeked of incompetence.

In a convention orchestrated in every detail—from the content of speeches to the camera closeups of the miniscule number of black delegates whenever an appropriate subject was mentioned—Bush was personally responsible for only one decision. On his own, he selected his running mate. And in doing so he not only made competence a legitimate issue, but also exposed the shallowness and hypocrisy of his words.

If we are to believe Bush's staffers, Dan Quayle was chosen as the

Republican vice presidential candidate because of his age and good looks—he looks like a bland version of Robert Redford. These were supposed to make him attractive to the baby-boom generation and to women. But the revelation that Quayle used his family's influence to get into the Indiana National Guard, and thereby to avoid the draft during the Vietnam War, is likely to lose him votes among both those who supported and those who opposed the war during the '60s. The hawks will see him as a privileged hypocrite, the doves as a hypocritical hawk. And the idea that Quayle's looks are likely to win women's votes is insulting enough to add to the lad's negatives.

The more substantial—but soft-pedalled—considerations in choosing Quayle were his ultra-conservatism, which makes him attractive to Bush as a pacifier of the extreme right wingers, and his light weight, which, it is hoped, will make Bush look a little heavier.

In any case, Quayle is actually an entirely appropriate running mate for Bush. A multi-millionaire whose career has been made possible entirely by his family connections, Quayle is the quintessential country-club type. His politics are a good match for the man who was among Ronald Reagan's most unquestioningly loyal supporters. Quayle has consistently supported every military spending bill. He is a strong supporter of Star Wars and voted against an amendment to the 1987 military authorization bill that would have scrapped production of a chemical warfare bomb. He voted against limitations on nuclear testing and continued compliance with the unratified 1979 SALT II treaty limits on deployment of intercontinental ballistic missiles and opposed limiting development or testing of space-based antiballistic missile systems.

On judicial appointments, Quayle has also been a hardliner. He voted to confirm the nomination of Robert Bork to the Supreme Court, and he was instrumental in getting the even more extreme right-winger Daniel A. Manion confirmed as a judge on the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Quayle has also opposed civil rights legislation, environmental limits on the nuclear power industry and strongly opposed the bill that required employers to give 60 days' advance notice of plant closings or mass layoffs.

In short, Bush's instinct in choosing Dan Quayle was unerring. In culture, style and substance, Quayle and Bush are a near-perfect match.

*In These Times* believes that to guarantee our life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, Americans must take greater control over our nation's basic economic and foreign policy decisions. We believe in a socialism that fulfills rather than subverts the promise of American democracy, where social needs and rationality, not corporate profit and greed, are the operative principles. Our pages are open to a wide range of views, socialist and non-socialist, liberal and conservative. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

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# LETTERS

## What if...?

JAMES WEINSTEIN'S EDITORIAL "A RESOLUTION TO the left's historical dilemma" (ITT, Aug. 3), makes some good points. But it fails to confront the contingencies in the months immediately ahead. The greatest danger to the Dukakis campaign can be formulated simply: through a manipulated foreign-policy crisis, or by some unforeseen development, Bush draws close; the Duke, pressured by Bentsen, the bankers and bad instincts, rabbits right, removing the campaign issues and levelling the debate down to "management." Progressive campaigners lose heart and drop away. Between a Republican and a pseudo-Republican, the voters choose the real article.

There's also another related danger, part of the simmering eco-crisis that we are now living through. Ordinary Americans of various political leanings begin to ask themselves whether any candidate is willing to address seriously the oceanic pollution, greenhouse effect heat and drought and the unnerving uglification of both city and countryside. As Dick Russell points out in the same issue, neither Dukakis' record nor his advisers' formulations are convincing. Do these voters turn in panic away from Bush—or (in characteristic American fashion) disgustedly away from the politicians altogether? Does *In These Times* even imagine that Dukakis will address the seriousness of this issue? The proper anti-corporate slogan of the day, "They stole our summer!" exempts none of the neo-liberals from complicity in the destruction of life's simplest pleasures.

So how do progressives insert themselves into the process in the short run? Perhaps the state and local Dukakis campaigns will accommodate them with a tilt in the framing of the issues. Very possibly not. What alternatives? Perhaps People's Committees Against Bush (PCABs), which oppose the vice president without flagging on the issues (contra aid, most especially, but also environmentalism, racism, the Vietnamization of El Salvador, and so forth) that Duke would like to duck but that the left has the duty and obligation of *not* abandoning. Too divisive? Unrealistic? Let's hear some other proposals.

Paul Buhle  
Providence, R.I.

## Prisoners of profit

I READ WITH MUCH INTEREST DEBORAH DAVIS' ARTICLE, "Prisons for profit" (ITT, Aug. 17). I am a direct-care worker in a group home for adult psychiatric clients. I have also worked in a halfway house for adult felony offenders and in group homes for social-service and court-referred youth. Davis wrote in a particular way about the problems inherent in prisons for profit, but she could have been writing more generally about problems inherent in *any* for-profit residential facility for public wards. I have encountered the same high turnover of workers, lack of training and other cost-cutting practices (e.g., inadequate maintenance, poor food) she describes, generally as part and parcel of the care of marginal members of our society.

These private corporations (which may be as small as one owner running one group home to the large business of Davis' article) describe themselves as able to do more

cheaply and efficiently what government used to do at considerable public expense. The claim is to be able to save taxpayers' money, and, in the best American tradition, make a profit for themselves, too.

Well, yes, they can, as long as the workers, who provide the basics of care for the residents, clients, inmates, what have you, remain underpaid, with few or no benefits, and are undertrained. As a result, these corporations don't have to deal with the expenses of long-term, experienced employees. The level of care may never rise above a barely tolerated minimum, but who cares?

The government, which hands out the contracts to these corporations, does not have to deal with a large pool of either direct-care workers or clients, because they are scattered among numerous corporations, large and small. As a result, the risk that workers and/or clients may organize themselves to agitate for better pay, conditions, etc., is minimized.

Unfortunately, it becomes very hard to make any of this a matter of public concern. The residents of these facilities—prisoners, mentally ill and developmentally disabled persons, adolescent wards of the state—are marginalized members of our society. The workers in these facilities, for reasons that would make an interesting study in itself, are unorganized, transient, often young and inexperienced—a union organizer's nightmare.

Mick Corliss  
Ypsilanti, Mich.

## Michigan challenge

ROGER KERSON'S REPORT (ITT, AUG. 17) OF THE Baker-Pollack primary in Ann Arbor suggests it is impossible to challenge the existing electoral structure in order to develop a popular left party constituency into a social democratic party. The success of Jesse Jackson in Michigan's March 1988 hybrid caucus-primary suggests this is not the case.

The strategy for the left in both March and August was the same: identifying and mobilizing those few voters (10-25 percent of the electorate or less) who will actually turn out and vote in a primary election. An effective volunteer effort will neutralize the influence of big money. Where both candidates have roughly equivalent "grass-roots" networks, as was the case I believe with Lana Pollack and Dean Baker, money may prove decisive. All the media money of Dukakis, Gephardt, Gore et al. could not dent the solid volunteer effort organized on behalf of Jesse Jackson statewide only five months earlier.

Robert S. Dombroski  
North Street, Mich.

**Roger Kerson replies:** I agree with Dombroski that under certain circumstances a strong message and a massive mobilization of volunteers can beat a big-money campaign—but it's important to understand what those circumstances are. Jesse Jackson won a caucus, not a primary, in Michigan. Polling sites were in unusual places and it was confusing to figure out where to vote. The purpose of such exercises is to minimize voter participation and to allow the established party organization to control the process by mobilizing its faithful cadre.

But this backfired in Michigan because the backbone of the state Democratic Party organization—the labor movement—was neutral. This created a void that Jackson filled with a substantial network of volunteers—and with a surge of free media attention generated by a set of dynamic campaign appearances.

Not every candidate has such advantages, which is why it is so difficult for volunteer-based campaigns to succeed. It is certainly not impossible, however, as Dean Baker showed in the 1986 Democratic primary.

## The must syndrome

YOUR LAST EDITION (ITT, AUG. 17) RAISED ISSUES that point to the need for a labor party to provide left-of-center, pro-worker competition necessary to break the Democratic Party's monopoly on "progressive" issues.

Roger Kerson's article on liberals vs. leftists in Michigan and the article on prison privatization by Deborah Davis deal with situations similar to those we have in Wisconsin—only worse. Even though a strongly pro-labor candidate, Ed Garvey, is running in the Democratic primary for the U.S. Senate, some opportunistic union officials are supporting Anthony Earl, a former governor who was responsible for privatization schemes that cost the jobs of state workers. They know that Earl's "progressive" facade

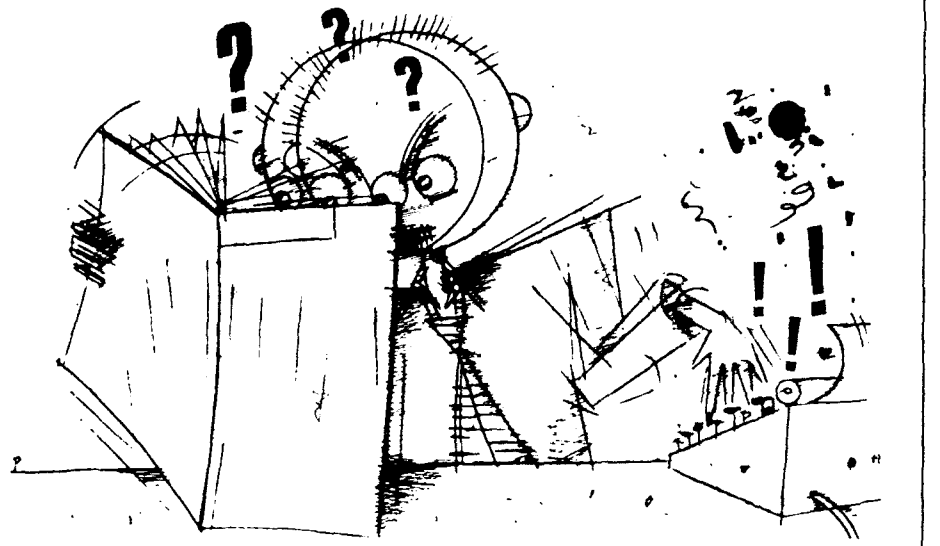
(anti-contra, anti-South Africa, pro-gay rights, etc.) is accompanied by an affinity for the rich that led him to support the privatization of a multi-million-dollar state-created organization (Wisconsin Higher Education Corporation, which has a monopoly to guarantee student loans in Wisconsin), resulting in fatter bank accounts for wealthy people with personal ties to Earl and displacement and anguish for around a hundred state workers (predominantly female) and their families. In addition, Earl has publicly stated that any public-sector jobs with "private-sector counterparts" should be eligible for privatization. If Earl gets in the Senate, he is likely to support schemes to privatize federal agencies and victimize federal workers. None of this matters to those "labor" officials who support Earl because they think he has the best chance of winning and they feel they must support any Democrat against the Republican candidate in the general election.

Labor must stop supporting back-stabbing candidates who kiss the asses of the rich and kick workers in the teeth. We must reject the "lesser evil" justification and demand some high standards. This will inevitably mean a party to the left of the Democrats, based on organized labor. It will also mean that dedicated "progressives" must be willing to support a pro-labor party filled with people who do not subscribe to a liberal "laundry list" of "politically correct" positions to take on every known issue.

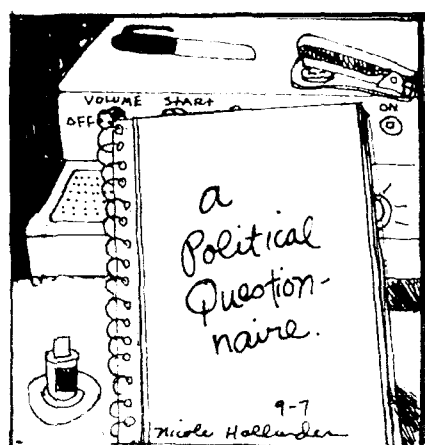
A.D. Powell  
Madison, Wis.

## Correction

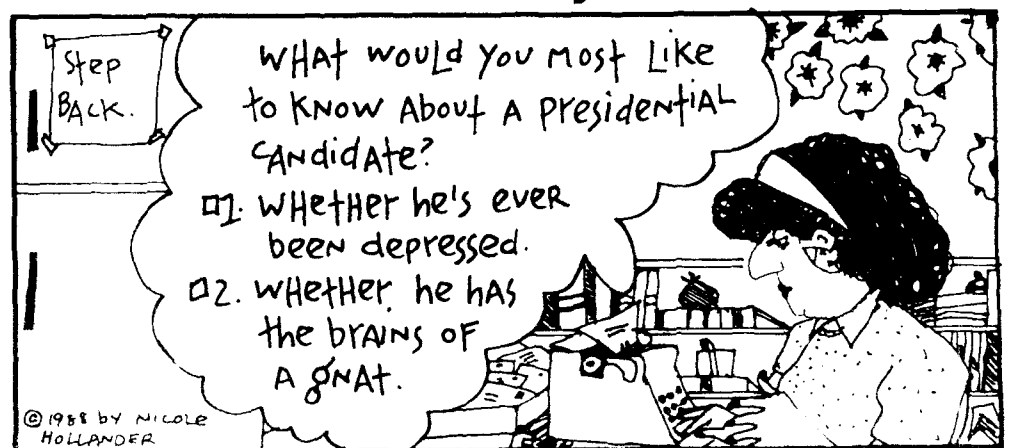
N. St-Cyr's letter (ITT, Aug. 3) was abbreviated in editing. The original letter actually suggested that a permanent special prosecutor for "race-related" violence in New York State would further marginalize blacks in local politics *except* where they are a large percentage of the population.



## SYLVIA



## by Nicole Hollander





## An interview with former Czech leader Dubcek

Two weeks ago, more than 10,000 people shouting "Dubcek, Dubcek!" demonstrated in Prague to commemorate the 1968 democratic "renovation" known as the Prague Spring and to demand that the Soviet Union apologize for the invasion of Czechoslovakia that cut it short on August 21 of that year. The principal architect of the Czech experiment in "socialism with a human face," Alexander Dubcek, was then secretary of the Czech Communist Party (CCP). That August, 20 years ago, he was arrested and later expelled from the Party and relegated to the margins of Czech society.

Now Dubcek has broken his silence, speaking on the record with Renzo Foa of *l'Unita*, the daily newspaper of the Italian Communist Party. The following is taken from that interview, published in Rome earlier this year and now translated and condensed by Teresa Prados Torreira.

### What do you think of Gorbachov's perestroika?

*Perestroika* is indispensable. It enables us to address the problems that face a mature socialist community. I hail and support *perestroika* because I find a clear connection between what it now proposes and what we proposed 20 years ago.

### You were the protagonist of those events 20 years ago.

The protagonist was the whole people. It was a collective work in which all sectors participated. We don't pretend to say that nothing has been done in these past 20 years, but there was a time when our country was among the 10 most advanced countries. Today it's at the tail of the first 20.

### How do you compare your experience and the current evolution of the USSR?

There are similarities. Both experiences had similar sources of inspiration: the need to analyze socialism more globally, more in harmony with the world technical and scientific revolution; the realization that it is necessary to rebuild the entire economy from the bottom up, to restructure the relationship between the market and the socialist society; the need to stimulate the pluralistic interests of mass organizations—cultural and other kinds—that are active in society; the need to define the norms and practices of social justice that respects the interests of the whole society. There are similarities in the idea then and now of democratizing the party and society, of stimulating all the resources and advantages that socialism offers as an attractive option for the future of civilization and in the policy of a peaceful coexistence with capitalist countries.

### How did the "new course" in Czechoslovakia come about?

Before '68, there was a period when autocratic methods provoked economic stagnation. Any attempt at change was suffocated. The gap between theory and practice, between slogans and reality, words and actions widened.

### What do you think of the recent declarations made by the current leadership of the CCP about the political evolution in the USSR?

The political leadership in my country also appears to favor *perestroika* and *glasnost*. But I have observed more words than actions. The important thing is to begin feeling the effect, to feel that the atmosphere in the country begins to change. To that end



Alexander Dubcek at home in Bratislava

all the creative forces in society should merge and develop a policy of real reconstruction. Everything confirms the fact that socialism cannot survive on stereotypes, ossification, dogmatism and sectarianism. I have always been convinced that socialism can and should be the social, economic, political and cultural order most able to understand and satisfy the needs and interests of workers. At its center should be the maximum of humanism, ethics and morality. Socialism, peace, equal rights, human and national self-determination—those have always been part of my credo. From all this flows my support, and the support of people like me, for Soviet *perestroika*. My support is sincere, loyal and unequivocal.

### Perestroika in the USSR, but problems in other Warsaw Pact countries? Shouldn't there be a critical analysis of the crisis of socialist society?

The word "crisis" needs clarification. In the USSR they are talking today of overcoming a state of pre-crisis. In Czechoslovakia, as

**"Everything goes back to the relationship between democracy and socialism. Our renovation in 1968 was led by the Central Committee of the Communist Party, but the people also desired to get involved in a democratic way in the cause of socialism."**

opposed to Hungary in '56 and Poland in the early '80s, it was the Central Committee of the CCP who led the renovation in order to avoid the explosion of similar crises. Socialist parties have historical differences, based on when they were founded, on the political, economic, cultural conditions

they started with. In Czechoslovakia—a country with a democratic tradition, even though of the classic bourgeois kind—the situation was not the same as those countries that emerged from dictatorship. Today the USSR is more sensitive to each specific situation.

The history of the socialist countries tells us that economic and political crises are possible. That fact wasn't written in our manuals. We believed crises were only a result of the contradictions of capitalism. But we learned that socialism is also subject to crisis. The mere possession of the means of production does not guarantee its "socialization." It is necessary to adopt social and economic reforms. Other mistakes added to our economic deformation: the liquidation of small artisans and commercial businessmen; the attacks on small farmers; the assumption that in socialism there is no conflict between social and individual interests. Among the causes of the crisis in the socialist community: the perversion of the legal system, the violation of human and civil rights.

### What do you think the role of the Communist Party should be?

A critical look at the recent and the not so recent past is needed. Each socialist country—in the spirit of renaissance visible today in the USSR—should find the solutions appropriate to its political, cultural and civil problems. In Czechoslovakia the '68 process of renaissance lasted less than nine months, but the results exceeded any others in the past. It wasn't a counterrevolutionary period. The whole society participated. We had mass participation in the movement for renovation. We were not, as we were accused of being, a conservative force manipulated by imperialist forces. We knew our policies were just and accepted by the people.

### Can the open sore of the Soviet intervention in August '68 be healed?

It can be healed, but it needs real medicine, not cosmetics. It cannot be healed with oblivion, by creating a blank space. It is part of our people's hereditary memory. The whole history of Czechoslovakia is colored by its relationship to the USSR. I don't say we should live in the past. Those of us in favor of socialism should work loyally to overcome the past. But those in power have more possibilities and a greater responsibility to construct a future, not on the foundation of what took place on Aug. 21, 1968, and not on the policies that followed afterward—policies that had tragic consequences for the party and society—but on the basis of a new political program.

### After '68 there have been other crises in other socialist countries. Don't you think that the main problem the CCP had in '68, the relationship between democracy and socialism, has yet to be solved?

Right, everything goes back to the relationship between democracy and socialism. Our renovation was led by the Central Committee which took the initiative with a revolutionary program based on a socialist democracy. There was a great desire on the people's part to get involved in a democra-

tic way, in a civil way, in the cause of socialism. Among their reasons was the feeling that there was a gap between the reality and the possibilities of socialism. Now, the Communist Party and the socialist state should make sure that the system produces decisions that affirm day-to-day the nature of socialism, and that respect the source of all power, that is to say, the people. This is a socialist principle. And we need to prevent excessive concentration of power in the hands of the few. Power must be exercised through the strength of ideas, not with violent force or repression. The people should have the right to elect, control and recall their representatives. It is right to emphasize the relationship between democracy and socialism. These are two terms that should go together. That's why I appreciate so much the current position of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union when it affirms "the real unity of Communists is in their struggle for a common goal: peace and socialism." This wasn't said 20 years ago.

### Many in the West think that bringing up the relationship between democracy and socialism was the cause for the intervention.

This problem, the attempt to affirm that relationship, was the key to our revolutionary program. But we didn't have time, nor the tranquility, to put our policies into action. It was not in our hands. I have heard all kinds of critiques of what we did, but no one has ever told me what we should have done. Soviet intervention could only have been avoided had we abandoned our program, but we were not willing to do so. If the Soviet Union had the leadership it has today, the armed intervention of five armies in Czechoslovakia would have been unthinkable.

### Do you reproach yourself for anything? Nothing substantial.

### Since you were expelled from the CCP in 1970, you have seldom broken your silence. Why that reserve?

I read the news of my expulsion in the papers. For a man who had been in the party since 1939, and active in the resistance, it is a wound that is difficult to heal. The wound has not closed. My life has been like that of a prisoner with limited freedoms. I was made to understand that I was on the "periphery" of society, in its margins. I have worked as a mechanic in a logging camp and also in an office. I have read literature and politics. Among the Marxist authors, Gramsci. He understood before we did the philosophical problems of industrialization and so many other things. My relation with the Central Committee of the CCP: I write to them and they file. They never answer. But that is a way of answering.

### In these long years, have you ever hoped to be able someday to finish the work that was interrupted? What do you hope for? What keeps your hopes up?

I hope that someday political honor will be restored to me and to many others. My hope comes from the justness of our convictions—the need to stimulate economic reform, combine democracy and socialism, define mechanisms that promote open interaction between the party and our people. My hope comes from the fact that our ideas have been confirmed. The desire for political renovation is alive in our people. It hasn't died. It lives on in the popular consciousness. Now it needs to be given an adequate shape. ■



## Nullity in New Orleans

Garry Wills remarked that the best parallel to Dan Quayle is not Tom Eagleton, dropped from the McGovern ticket in 1972 because he had once been treated for depression by electrotherapy, but Barry Goldwater's partner on the presidential trail in 1964, a nonentity called William Miller. No better illustration of the matchless cynicism, self-delusion and stupidity of George Bush and his strategists can be found than the choice of Quayle, starting with the idea that his "good looks" might corral women voters, and his youth the boomers. "He has about as much charm as an old Kotex box," snarled one long-distance telephone operator when quizzed on Quayle's allure.

The Quayle storm first arose around his use of wealth and influence to join the National Guard, thus injecting a class issue into the campaign with an urgency Jesse Jackson might envy. But there's hardly a facet of his background and political career that does not call for as unsparing scrutiny. Here is no whimsical apparition of the ultra-right, but the genetic, intellectual and financial consequence of a long-term conservative project. The Pulliam newspaper chain, of which Quayle is an heir, first nourished, through the *Arizona Republic*, the political career of Barry Goldwater. Close to the family was the Indiana family of the Mannions, *pere et fils*. The elder Mannion was a founder of the John Birch Society and the son's confirmation as federal judge was managed on the Senate floor by young Dan. No more servile a functionary of the Defense Department can be found on Capitol Hill.

A Pacifica reporter asked Quayle in his first disastrous press conference about his involvement in contragate, given his employment of fair-haired boy Rob Owen as an aide. (Owen, you may recall, was a mule for contra slush money, spoke frankly of contra leaders' low moral worth and read out to the Iran-contra committee a dreadful poem he had addressed to Oliver North.) Quayle replied tautly that the question was "off-base." But in fact his office was just such a crossroads of contra conspiracy. In Volume One of the Iran-contra source documents published by Congress (that I had occasion to cite in this column some months ago on the topic of NBC's flackery of the contras), Jack Terrell describes in a memoir how he went to Quayle's Senate office to discuss his plans to be a contra mercenary with another Quayle staff person, Joel Lisker. Absurdly, Lisker subsequently became a senior staffer on the Iran-contra committee.

## The Return of the Repressed

Quayle's tarnished credentials as a man prepared to live up to his own vile militarist ideals somewhat threw into the shadows George Bush's credentials as a war hero. The seed of this reputation was planted with the allegedly glorious circumstances of his behavior when shot down by Japanese gunfire while on a bombing run in his Grumman Avenger in September 1944. I examined the contradictions in Bush's various accounts in this space just under a year ago. Two weeks ago Chester Mierzejewski finally broke a 44-year silence in an excellent report by Alan Borg and Allen Wolper in the *New York Post*. Mierzejewski was a tail gun-

ner and spotter in a plane flying directly ahead of Bush. He saw Bush's plane being hit, probably in the engine. He says—contrary to Bush's account—that Bush's plane was "never on fire" and that "no smoke came out of his cockpit when he opened his canopy to bail out."

Mierzejewski was the best friend of one of Bush's crewmen, and says now, "I think he could have saved those lives, if they were alive. I don't know that they were, but at least they had a chance if he had attempted a water landing." And he insists that the plane looked in good enough shape for this to be done. In other words, as President Reagan likes to quote his imaginary Purple Heart recipient (though in fact the line came from an old war movie), maybe they should have ridden that one down together.

## Our Fallen Friend

Appropriately enough, Bush took the opportunity in his introduction of Dan Quayle to the world to mourn the passage of his friend Mohammed Zia ul-Haq, president of Pakistan, whose life came blessedly to an end in an air crash in mid-August.

Two things stood out immediately in U.S. media coverage of Zia's death. First, the story was being treated as an Afghanistan issue, with correspondents and reporters spending much time pondering the impact of the good general's death on the mujahedin and debating whether any potential successor will prove to be as unwavering in supporting the rebels. The lead in the *Wall Street Journal* article by Frederick Kempe on August 18 was typical: Zia's death, Kempe wrote, raised "concerns about the political stability of Washington's steadiest ally in southwest Asia and possibly threaten[ed] that country's support for the anti-Soviet resistance." Over at the networks, meanwhile, one "strategic studies expert" after another was dragged on to explain what Zia's demise meant in geopolitical terms.

Secondly, and obviously, the eulogies being delivered about the dictator, from government officials and the press, were wholly unjustified. In one of the more grotesque comments, Secretary of State Shultz called Zia "a great fighter for democracy." As we have seen, George Bush, in a comment to be expected from the man who toasted Ferdinand Marcos' love for "democracy," said Zia was "a friend of mine" and that "Pakistan and the U.S. have a very special relationship, and the loss of Gen. Zia is a great tragedy." Dukakis was equally reverential, saying he was "very saddened" and noting that the dictator was "very, very much involved with us in our effort to support the Afghanistan resistance."

These comments are perhaps understandable, as they come from representatives of the country that has been Zia's chief sponsor since he seized power in 1977. The Carter administration cut off military aid in 1979, after Zia refused to allow international inspection of Pakistan's nuclear program. Aid was resumed after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and soared during the Reagan years, with the current six-year package of \$4 billion (\$611 million this year) making Pakistan the fourth largest recipient of U.S. aid in the world and its army the seventh biggest in the world.

# ASHES & DIAMONDS

By Alexander Cockburn

The U.S. press followed the official line, portraying Zia as a man leading Pakistan toward "democracy" and lamenting the loss of a key U.S. ally. A *New York Times* editorial, awash with clichés, said that Zia was "certain it was his mission to impose unity on a fractious nation." The writer also said the general was "an effective, pragmatic bargainer" in the world of diplomacy and then weightily pondered the "post-Zia era." The *Washington Post* headlined a front-page article by John Goshko, "U.S. Sees a Continuing Transition to Democracy." Goshko implied that the Reagan administration's primary concern in Pakistan was the return of civilian rule, writing that tension between the two countries could arise if Zia's death "causes Pakistan's military leaders to halt the transition to democracy and revert to toughened repression."

Actually, this fabled "transition" to democracy was visible only to U.S. officials and reporters, as Zia arbitrarily dismissed the largely civilian government of Prime Minister Mohammed Khan Junejo on May 29 after it attempted to impinge on the military's power. He dissolved the lower house of the national assembly and the four state legislatures as well, which left the Senate as the only functioning governing body. In order to portray this action as a step toward democracy, Zia called for new parliamentary elections and said he had only acted because Junejo's government had failed to maintain law and order and enact Islamic

law.

Despite the fact that Zia has been promising a return of civilian rule from the very first days of his dictatorship, this explanation was largely swallowed by the media. The *New York Times* actually ran an editorial on June 1 endorsing Zia's dismissal of Junejo, saying that there might be real "substance in the steps he has just taken, sacking his prime minister and dissolving the National Assembly for alleged corruption, indifference to growing lawlessness and delay in transforming Pakistan into an Islamic society." The writer also said there were "encouraging signs that Gen. Zia means to let political parties play a role in the voting now due within 90 days." The *Times* must have been crushed when, shortly thereafter, Zia decreed that elections would be held in November, well outside of the 90-day limit called for by the constitution, and then again in July, when he made it clear that candidates would not be allowed to run as representatives of political parties, apparently unaware of the "encouraging signs" the *Times* had seen.

The truth is that Zia's action had little to do with "growing lawlessness" and a lot to do with his unpopularity with Junejo's government. Thus, he dismissed the government, as any self-respecting dictator would do. Zia's problems with Junejo were twofold. First, he felt that the prime minister had been too anxious to reach an accord on Afghanistan. In addition to a withdrawal of Soviet troops, Zia wanted some sort of internal settlement that would have given the mujahedin some share of power, and he felt that tack had not been sufficiently

Continued on page 22

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## Jennifer Stone unturned from her always critical task

By David Volpendesta

**W**HEN HER VOICE COMES OVER the airwaves, full-bodied and resonant, Jennifer Stone casts a spell that immediately sparks the intellect and enlivens the emotions. Not only does the movie and TV critic for KPFA (a listener-sponsored Berkeley, Calif., radio station) possess one of the most unique voices in radio, her insights into the secular religion of celluloid are as trenchant and revealing as they are heretical to her mainstream counterparts, most of whom lack her invigorating humor and the ability to situate cinema in an artistic, historical and socio-political context.

The self-effacing Stone, however, does not regard herself as any high priestess of celluloid. She's unimpressed with most of contemporary film criticism which, as she says in her new book, *Mind Over Media* (Cayuse Press, P.O. Box 9086, Berkeley, CA 94709), "is reduced to a sort of bitchcraft, tucked into gossip columns in the trash section of tabloids. Or worse, it becomes elitist, what Noel Coward called 'piss elegant,' confined to the state-of-the-art esoterica published in journals read only in film schools."

As she sat in the KPFA Literature and Drama office discussing her book and conceptions of cinema, she was quick to point out that one of the basic tenets of her critical perspective is rooted in a disdain for the authoritarian and the sado-masochistic images that have become the common leitmotifs for all human relationships in the '80s. Reflecting on how these images of dominance and submission have saturated the collective mind via film, she remarked: "We have to get away from this death of the heart stuff and get back to being human beings again."

beings again."

**All over the map:** In addition to her role as film critic, Stone is also a published novelist, an actress, journalist, school teacher, mother, playwright, short-story writer, poet and essayist. Always unpredictable, Stone's next book, *Stone's Throw* (North Atlantic Books) will be a collection of literary criticism.

The one predictable thing about her is that her weekly radio show, *Mind Over Media*, is always provocative. "I came to KPFA in 1982," she said. "I was doing a piece for *Grassroots* on Dr. Nawal El Saadawi, an Egyptian Marxist who had been imprisoned by Sadat under Egyptian law No. 96, the law 'for the protection of values from shame.' She wrote a book called *The Hidden Face of Eve* in which she suggested that it was not good for women's physical and mental health to have their genitals cut off.... I was on the air asking people to write letters to get her out of jail. She was eventually released."

### RADIO

Stone was quick to point out that one of the basic tenets of her critical perspective is rooted in a disdain for the authoritarian and the sado-masochistic images that have become the common leitmotifs for all human relationships in the '80s. Reflecting on how these images of dominance and submission have saturated the collective mind via film, she remarked: "We have to get away from this death of the heart stuff and get back to being human beings again."

Unpredictability is the one constant on Jennifer Stone's weekly radio show.



As a feminist and self-described "mythomaniac," one of Stone's great critical strengths is her ability to reveal and explicate film's subtextual language. Oliver Stone's *Platoon* is a film whose cleverly occulted message she finds particularly disgusting.

"The megalomacho medal of dishonor is not hard to award these days," she writes, "as filmmakers slip deeper and deeper into the mire of mythology, leading a new generation

### To Berkeley film critic Jennifer Stone, the popular arts are a vehicle for detecting and articulating future social and political trends.

of young men to the slaughter. Only one on-air television critic noticed the real message of *Platoon*. Anne Taylor Fleming did a special report on the *MacNeil-Lehrer Newshour*, standing all the while in a military graveyard backed by a field of white crosses. Of course, one feminist film critic crying in the wilderness didn't stop the picture from winning an Academy Award."

**Left-wing magic:** Although film directors whose images are drenched in testosterone incite her ire, Stone, who studied acting with the legendary Uta Hagen, is not only delightfully dramatic—and always spontaneously willing to dissolve her own masks—she's also enamored of actors and their art. "One of the rules of the actor's craft is to be as a child again," she writes in *Mind Over Media*. "Actor/priest was originally the same job. The theater is left-wing magic and theology is right-wing magic."

A Berkeley-styled revolutionary in the '60s, Stone's fascination with the magic of cinema and the arts is directly related to her contempt for artifice and one of film's most insidious perversions, pornography. "Pornography is about slavery," she writes in *Mind Over Media*. "Erotica is now esoteric. It is most often the property of the elite.... Misogyny is the death of the heart."

One of the ways Stone keeps her own heart alive is by being honest about who she is. Always careful to sketch in the parameters of her own personal reality in relationship to whatever film she's reviewing, she refuses to let her role as critic mask the true nature of her feelings and perceptions.

"*Shoot the Moon* chronicles the middle-class malaise which hit America in the '70s," she writes. "[Diane] Keaton and the kids are the last of their breed.... [Albert] Finney is a writer who imagines, apparently,

that he can leave his wife and daughters and keep them, too. Basically he's a killer ape. Very spoiled and terminally arrogant. When his primordial violence explodes, the audience laughs from the shock. Not me. I've known males just like that one. You know, the ones who destroy what they cannot have."

The personal dimension that Stone brings to her criticism never becomes obtrusive, primarily because she does not become self-indulgent. Although she's passionately concerned with the internal life that shapes characters and artists, she does not lose sight of socio-political realities.

**Bigger pictures:** Moreover, in *Mind Over Media* she demonstrates a devastating view of the social function most critics fulfill. "In most circles, the critical faculty is suppressed, treated with suspicion, primarily because it interferes with consumerism. Consumerism is our national religion.... Our so-called critics must make their livings by accommodating the sleaze and soap opera which makes up the bulk of our popular art. Most of this material is tainted with a pornographic mind set, the mind set which believes that things and people can be *had*: cars, women, countries, the earth itself."

To Stone the popular arts are a vehicle for detecting future social and political trends. Captivated by classical literature and myth, both of which are constantly incorporated into her critiques, she strives to situate her subjects within their historical context.

In *Mind Over Media* she writes: "I am interested in the prosaic notion that film, like literature, is first of all historical, and tells the truth of our time in the same way Aristophanes' plays tell the truth of his day.... Marx told us that changes in the modes of production change history, and McLuhan told us that changes in the modes of communication change perception.... When I was growing up, the major mode of communication was print. Words. We made the words into pictures in our heads.... Words give us theories, concepts. Images are precepts, but powerful beyond words. They go right to the brain stem."

Part of Stone's work as a critic is to help to dissolve the hypnotic spell created by the images that initiate and perpetuate what she sees as contemporary society's all-pervading death wish. At the very least, her penetrating critiques help undermine the mindlessness of the homogenized mass media and provide an intellectual and emotional oxygen that helps sustain an often stifled culture of resistance. ■

**David Volpendesta** is co-editor of two forthcoming books: *Clamor of Innocence* (City Lights), a collection of Central American short stories, and *Homeless Not Helpless* (Canterbury Press).



**American Media and Mass Culture: Left Perspectives**  
 Edited by Donald Lazere  
 University of California Press  
 618 pp., \$15.95

**Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture**  
 Edited by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg  
 University of Illinois Press  
 752 pp., \$18.95

By Pat Aufderheide

## The interplay of consuming desires and critical masses

crankers-out of para-literature, fashion designers and ad whizzes, what comes out of the commercial machinery is a cultural product.

Shaped by forces that the term "market" elegantly obscures, commercial culture has implications for society now and in the future. To puzzle out those forces and implications may be going against tradition—both within the academy and the corporate world—but it's a worthy challenge.

**Evolving understanding:** These two anthologies offer a range of intellectual takes on that challenge, directed toward different audiences.

### CULTURE

Adding their selections up, they make a convincing argument that critical theory is not only thriving but evolving.

*American Media and Mass Culture*, edited by Donald Lazere, is intended as a college text, and it's a superb collection of readings from vigorous left intellectuals both within and outside the academy. (Ten of the contributors have also appeared in the pages of *In These Times*, including Ariel Dorfman and Simon Frith.) Russell Jacoby, whose *The Last Intellectuals* mourns the absence of public intellectuals today, may want to check out the authors' list; it might cheer him up.

Organized by abstract categories ("Ideology in Perception, Structure and Genre," "Moments of Historical Consciousness"), the units each contain lively, insightful, concretely based cultural analysis. Frank Capra; rock; soap operas; Daffy Duck; public access cable; Superman; advertisements and other topics form grist for cultural critics.

The "duped masses" argument is barely in view in this selection, though the articles focus on the powerful and the popular. Lazere, an English professor at California Polytechnic State University, provides helpful introductions to each section, with historical background and sometimes translations of the denser work into garden-variety English.

Some articles, such as Clare Sparks' memos to Pacifica radio staff hashing over audience and program questions, come out of direct experience with production. You don't have to agree with her arguments to see that they illuminate basic conflicts. Some, like Peter Dreier's tackling of conservatives' charge that liberal views dominate the media, are meticulously researched reporting. Others, such as Mark Naison's analysis of changes in organized sports with the rise of U.S. imperial power,

and Tom Engelhardt's now-classic look at Third and Fourth World images in American popular movies, link close textual reading with economic and political context.

The authors typically let their analysis of mass culture phenomena (and challenges to it) demonstrate their methods, rather than taking time out to argue theoretical points. The perspectives, mostly from the left, are both Marxist and heterodox. A few can't even be considered left—for instance, articles by Neil Postman and George Gerbner and colleagues at the Annenberg School of Communication—but were included for their bolstering, in language oriented toward a general or scholarly audience, of perspectives held by many leftists.

**Unified theory fields:** The selections are unified by several shared tenets. They relate cultural production to its social, political and economic context. They are fascinated with the creation and power of ideology. And the authors clearly believe that understanding cultural processes is basic to cultural change.

Another recent anthology, *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, is pitched more narrowly at academic peers in the business of cultural analysis. The result of an interna-

tional conference held at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana in 1983, the (much-revised) articles offer a state-of-the-art guide to theoretical debates now raising heat and dust in the field of communications.

Actually, as several of the articles make clear, even the field of play is becoming unclear. The challenge of interpreting reality these days crosses any neat disciplinary boundaries. Nonetheless, there are general themes. Where do cultural questions clash with Marxist intellectual tradition? What is modernity and postmodernity? How do people make challenges to dominant culture? How do new technologies affect social opportunities?

**Cultural fashion statements:** As the editors point out, Marxist theory has always had an Achilles heel in culture. Often culture has been seen simply as a spinoff of the relations of "real" production. Since

**These collections are a convincing argument that critical theory is evolving.**

people perform those relations "dressed" in their culture, that leaves you wondering who made their cultural clothes, or whether culture miraculously doesn't need to be produced.

In the '60s, young American scholars politicized by the Vietnam War and themselves often immersed in burgeoning youth culture discovered Antonio Gramsci, Rosa Luxemburg, members of the Frankfurt School and other resurrected critical thinkers. They began to discover living theorists such as Stuart Hall, who had long been working on and beyond these new-found sources. And they began to participate in the Continental intellectual war games held on the bare ground of the theory of knowledge.

This collection shows you how the debate has matured, and some of the terms changed, in the '80s. It also shows that critical theory continues to be an international endeavor. Some of the most interesting work in the anthology (admittedly showcasing an international conference) comes from non-Americans.

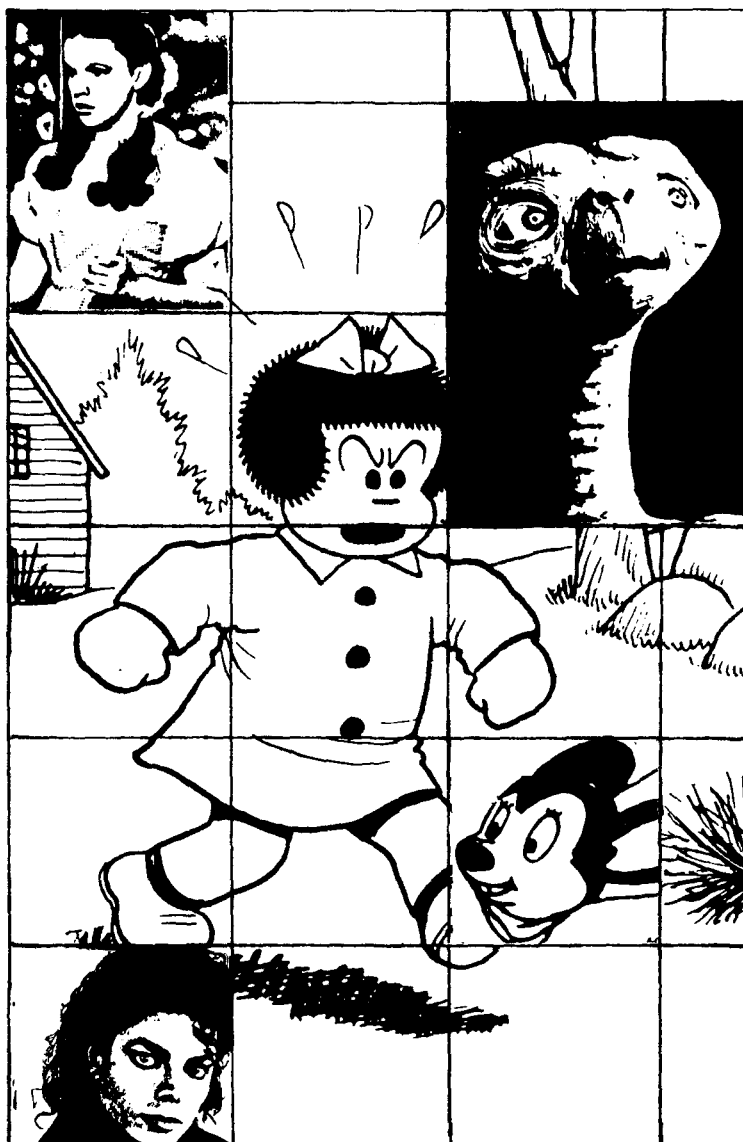
Given the general level of abstraction, the energy and immediacy of the work comes as a pleasant surprise. Clogged as some of the writing can be (try Gayatri Spivak in her essay on the voice of the "Other"), the authors are all grappling with how to understand the world better in order to change it for the better.

Some of the essays masterfully reset the terms of discussion. Perry Anderson's essay on modernism and postmodernism makes short work of such recent obscurantist writing on postmodernism. Jean Franco's "Beyond Ethnocentrism: Gender, Power and the Third-World Intelligentsia" excellently debunks a current romance with the abstraction of "Third World culture," while finding an energetic core in cultural battles off-shore.

The distance between the subject of study and the mode of analysis is still breathtakingly grand. That doesn't have to be bad. But too often critical work on commercial culture drains its subject of its appeal—the very reason to study it. That's why it's refreshing to encounter, in *Marxism...*, sociologist and rock critic Simon Frith: "I have to confess that I spend more time listening to records than reading theoretical texts, and what interests me are the flashes of light that come from the cultural marketplace itself."

American commercial culture proliferates faster than theoretical jargon can keep up. And as the terms of commercial culture ever more thoroughly pervade the society, it becomes more and more of a challenge even to find language outside it to describe it. These two anthologies both demonstrate that a community of intellectuals is at work on the challenge, and that sometimes they succeed. ■

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## Dancing in the dark with Dorfman: the poetry of loss

**Last Waltz in Santiago**  
By Ariel Dorfman  
Penguin Books, 78 pp., \$8.95

By Lou Lipsitz

**N**OVELIST AND ESSAYIST ARIEL Dorfman has been an eloquent and persistent spokesman for democracy and decency in his native Chile. He has lived in exile since 1973, the year of the military coup that over-

threw Salvador Allende, Chile's last democratically elected president. Dorfman's voice has been heard frequently on the Op-Ed page of the *New York Times* and elsewhere, calling attention to the brutality taking place in Chile. He has fought for a return to respect for human rights. It has been a long time. Fifteen years. Fifteen years of disappearances, murder and exile.

*Last Waltz in Santiago* is a book of poems that in one sense is deeply

political. Every poem speaks, however obliquely, of the tragedy and suffering in Chile. But with very few exceptions these are not what most of us would recognize as "political" poems, or poems of protest. They do not address the big issues in the political arena. They do not moralize or harangue. These poems are quiet, personal and moving. They speak directly out of the suffering that Dorfman has experienced personally and known in others.

Ariel Dorfman probes the disappearance of the everyday in *Last Waltz in Santiago*.



**Indecent burials:** Many of the poems focus on some simple human need, question or dilemma that holds an extraordinary poignance amid the atmosphere of terror and brutality. In one poem someone says: "just/ to be able/ to bury your body/ to have a place/ where your mother/ can go..." In another, God is asked if he has seen one of the disappeared. In yet another, children

you even in my dreams/ let me have the night at least/ for dreaming of you alive, at my side, in the dark, your face quiet and warm like an echo...." And later in the same poem: "in my dreams and at dawn/ in that other place/ you scream and you scream/ and there is nothing/ understand?/ I can do/ to make you/ stop."

**Essential repetition:** The poems have a slow, cumulative effect. Their quiet, persistent questioning growing out of loss, grief, confusion, pain, fear, revulsion and the wish to survive and remember builds a strong feeling of empathy. At first it seems that Dorfman has written too simply, too repetitively. Why are his speakers asking the same question, making the same statement, again and again? But it becomes apparent that this is part of the process of grieving and recognition, of confronting an impossible and terrible reality. In their simplicity, many of these poems achieve a sense of being there with the sufferer. There are not many political poems that proceed with so much quiet dignity and reach such simple, but vast, human depths.

Dorfman also manages to write with unusual honesty about his own confusions and struggles, his loneliness in exile and his sense that he

### CHILE

play a game of being mommy and daddy, asking each other what they will do if the authorities come to take them away—as they have overheard their parents doing:

*What if they take the children?  
That's what you have to ask  
if you're the mommy.*

*That's what I have to ask?  
What if they take the children?  
That's what I ask, right?*

In many other poems, people remember the day someone disappeared. A mother does not want to open the letters her missing daughter is still receiving. A wife whose husband is missing says: "must I lose

### One way to be "disappeared"

There is one short poem in the volume that can be quoted in full that exhibits the elements Dorfman brings together to achieve a seemingly effortless, natural voice:

#### SUN STONE

*They put the prisoner  
against the wall.  
A soldier ties his hands.  
His fingers touch him—strong,  
gentle, saying goodbye.  
—Forgive me, companero—  
says the voice in a whisper.  
The echo of his voice  
and of  
those fingers on his arm  
fills his body with light  
I tell you his body fills with  
light  
and he almost does not hear  
the sound of the shots.*



cannot, really, speak for others. In one, he says: "I find myself crying at the end of General Hospital. I swear it's true: the worst soap opera on TV, the cheapest song a good-bye on a platform or a broken balloon in a child's hand are all it takes.... I learn they killed your sister on a street corner the children in the slums eat cats and dogs if they can find them...and I am not moved. I am not moved. I must be very sick. I'm afraid. I'm afraid. I'm afraid of what's happening to me. I'm afraid so afraid of what's happening to me." In another he describes "this unspeakable relief" when, receiving a phone call from Chile, he discovers it is not "you" who has been killed

or disappeared, but someone else."

**Side-stepping the polemics:** Because of Dorfman's approach one usually cannot get a full sense of what the poems are like by quot-

ing a few lines. And sometimes the poems do repeat the same ideas too much; sometimes they are simpler than seems appropriate. But often their telling, everyday details

bring us toward people living with pain and confusion.

During the Allende years, the great Chilean poet Pablo Neruda produced a book of political poems

declaiming against conservative forces in Chile and against the interference of the U.S. in Chile's fate. Though he was one of the century's most original and powerful writers, Neruda's volume unfortunately shows us just how manufactured and unmoving political poetry can sometimes be. He was trying so hard to express his anger that his work degenerated into a dry polemic, leaving us out of touch with the genuinely human meaning of events. This is what Dorfman does not do, and we must honor his restraint and sensitivity. ■

**Lou Lipsitz** is a professor of political science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

By Michael Phillips

**D**URING THE LAST 15 YEARS OF imposed, retracted, re-imposed and re-retracted exile from his native Chile, author Ariel Dorfman's status hit bottom when a government-controlled radio station erroneously announced news of his death.

Prior to 1973, Dorfman had become a key cultural influence as novelist, poet, critic and head of the state publishing agency during Salvador Allende's democratic socialist era. With the CIA-backed assassination of Allende and the subsequent rise of Gen. Augusto Pinochet, Dorfman found himself one of between 11,000 and 50,000 citizens (depending on whose reports you believe) told to get out of Chile or risk execution.

Now, Dorfman makes his second home in Durham, N.C., teaching at Duke University eight out of every 24 months in between far-flung writing and travelling projects. Currently he wears the hat of first-time playwright. A second play is already in the works back in Chile.

*Widows*, adapted for the stage from his anguished novel of the same name, recently closed its world premiere at Fort Worth's Hip Pocket Theatre, as well as its official Equity premiere at the Williamstown, Mass., Theatre Festival. Other productions, including one at the New York Shakespeare Festival, are planned, along with a film version.

**Kid stuff:** As to how Dorfman's script found its way to a converted cow pasture outside Fort Worth, it was done "as these things should be done," said Dorfman, "through one's children."

Last fall Johnny and Diane Simons, founders of the Hip Pocket Theatre, visited Duke University to stage an antic amalgam based on works by Miguel de Cervantes. One of the cast members was Rodrigo Dorfman, Ariel's son. Impressed with the show, the elder Dorfman passed the Simons duo a copy of the *Widows* script as a friendly gesture.

"I've never been terribly political," admitted Simons. "But I felt haunted by the play.... We here in Cowtown have lived such a sheltered existence. And by Cowtown, I mean most of the United States."



Dorfman's *Widows*: a parable for Chile with global implications.

## Dorfman's *Widows* won't disappear

In novel form, *Widows* (published in Spanish in 1979, with the English translation appearing four years later) was ostensibly set in Nazi-occupied Greece. It concerned a military-ruled village. Most of the men have long disappeared during "interrogation" as potential agitators. At the outset, a battered body floats downriver and washes up on shore. Sofia Fuentes, a woman whose husband and sons are among the missing, claims the body as one of her own and demands a proper burial. The local captain refuses to give it up. It's clearly a parable for modern-day Chile, and applicable to every cycle of dictatorial rule throughout history.

**Cross-cultural resonance:** For the Hip Pocket premiere, the Simons brought together several Duke University staffers, including designer Wenhai Ma. The play's theme of exile plucked an all-too-familiar chord with Ma, whose native northeast China village was ravaged by the Cul-

tural Revolution.

"I was very little," said Ma, who created a multilevel village for the outdoor Hip Pocket stage. "But I still remember some horrible scenes. 'Human rights' wasn't an issue."

*Widows* has undergone some 20 or so revisions since the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles commissioned the stage version in 1985. Why the current flurry of interest in the play and its subject?

"Maybe it's the right moment," said Dorfman. "I think the U.S. is entering a new phase politically, and they're interested in taking a look at some of these problems. For many years America has been in a happy-go-lucky mood, or at least trying to convince itself that everything is fine—that if we just smile, our troubles will go away."

In bringing *Widows* to the stage, Dorfman has been only partially successful in finding theatrical equivalents to his literary voice. The majority of the 13 scenes deals with the

escalating battle of wits fought by the commanding captain and the stubborn Sofia Fuentes over possession of her late husband.

Dorfman's most impressive achievement comes in the fleshing out of the captain, a genuinely complex character at odds with his increasing self-doubt in the face of the village's widows. Ironically, he's far

**Dorfman conjures up world injustice by concentrating on tiny details.**

more interesting than the play's protagonist, Sofia. The stage version loads all Dorfman's heaviest baggage at her feet, making her more than just a central character. Often self-consciously, she's an idealized, mythic-sized series of character traits: Strength, Guts, Wisdom.

Dorfman, meanwhile, has already moved on to his second work for the stage, to be performed in early 1989. Titled *Reader*, it concerns a Latin American censor undergoing a series of interlocked crises. Dorfman recently visited Chile to work on the project with a group of actors and artists singled out with death threats by the government.

Like *Widows*, *Reader* was written in the long shadow of the Pinochet regime. For all the pain, the death of friends and collaborators and his own exile, Dorfman owes a tremendous creative debt to his homeland. He finds the task of creating overtly political art a tricky one.

"You can get preachy, you can get overwhelming, you can get morally superior, you can get abstract," he said. "What I wanted to see with *Widows* is if the actors and the director could give it the quality of the real and the unreal simultaneously. It's happening in one place concretely, but it's also happening everywhere, in what we call the landscape of the soul."

"It's happened ever since men have gone to war and women have waited. It's happened since young kids have been growing up without fathers. And since the land has been taken away from the peasants who have rebelled."

With two productions of *Widows* under his belt and more to come, Dorfman also has another novel—his first not to deal explicitly with Latin American politics—titled *Mas-cara*. A book of essays is forthcoming as well. Clearly Dorfman hasn't lessened his pace.

"I've always been like that," he said. "But I'm writing for a lot of dead people. And they still have a lot of stories to tell." ■

**Michael Phillips** is the theater critic for the *Dallas Times Herald*.



## Germany

Continued from page 9

West Germany needs "a strong aviation and space industry in order to be competitive with our partners in France and Great Britain."

The Social Democratic Party (SPD) voted against the EFA-90 in the Bundestag defense and budget committee last May, and the committee's SPD chairman, Rudi Walther, called the aircraft's financing "uncertain."

But what worries people in Germany is that the economic and political weight of the Daimler-MBB giant will be so great that no future government will be able to say no to its demands. It is a disturbing detail that Hanns Arnt Vogels took over MBB in 1983 after a long career as an executive for the multi-billion-dollar Friedrich Flick industrial group, center of a vast scandal in the early '80s involving illegal contributions to all the leading political parties.

The real scandal of the Flick affair was what it revealed about the continuity in German capitalism between the Third Reich and the Federal Republic. The head of the Flick group, Friedrich Karl Flick, called the richest man in West Germany, had inherited his fortune from his father, steel baron Friedrich Flick, a full-fledged Nazi who—as close friend and economic adviser to Heinrich Himmler—controlled not only German arms production but also the coal and steel industries in Nazi-occupied countries. This involved exploitation of slave labor. In 1947, the elder Flick was sentenced by the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal to seven years in prison. Three years later he was freed on condition that he "decartelize" what remained of his holdings (those in the Soviet-occupied zone were nationalized without compensation). He sold off his coal interests and used the money to build up the largest diversified holding company in West Germany.

When Hanns Arnt Vogels moved from Flick to MBB, it was partly to manage MBB's acquisition of a controlling share of Krauss-Maffei, the Flick subsidiary that makes the Leopard tank.

**"Share the burden":** With the "Soviet threat" fading, and regional conflicts ending, the timing might seem all wrong for the growth of a West German military-industrial complex. However, so long as industrialists shy from submitting their publicly financed projects (like Airbus) to democratic public debate, the combination of free enterprise doctrine and high-tech research-and-development needs always produces the same solution: disguised subsidies by way of arms contracts.

The persistent U.S. call for more "burden sharing" from the allies favors the growth of military-industrial complexes in Germany and Japan. The big industries of these countries can perceive an enlarged domestic arms market as a hedge against the eventual

decline of their overseas markets, due to client debt or protectionism. This essentially nationalist reflex can be packaged politically as a response to American pressures to "share the burden."

The INF treaty is being used in NATO as a pretext for the Europeans to "fill the gap" left by U.S. withdrawal of intermediate-range nuclear missiles from Europe—possible, since the European NATO allies did not sign the INF treaty. Projects under study by MBB and Dornier include a long-range standoff (LRS) missile for the Tornado, and a big payload cruise missile. Former West German defense minister and current NATO Secretary General Manfred Wörner has spoken of the need for the European NATO allies to have nuclear missiles able to strike Soviet territory.

If plans for such missile production materialize, they could revive the very "Soviet threat" they need as self-justification. German missiles to replace American Pershing-2 and cruise missiles would be a powerful argument for Gorbachov's adversaries in the Soviet Union to contend that the INF agreement was a fraud, and that the Soviet Union cannot risk further disarmament. □

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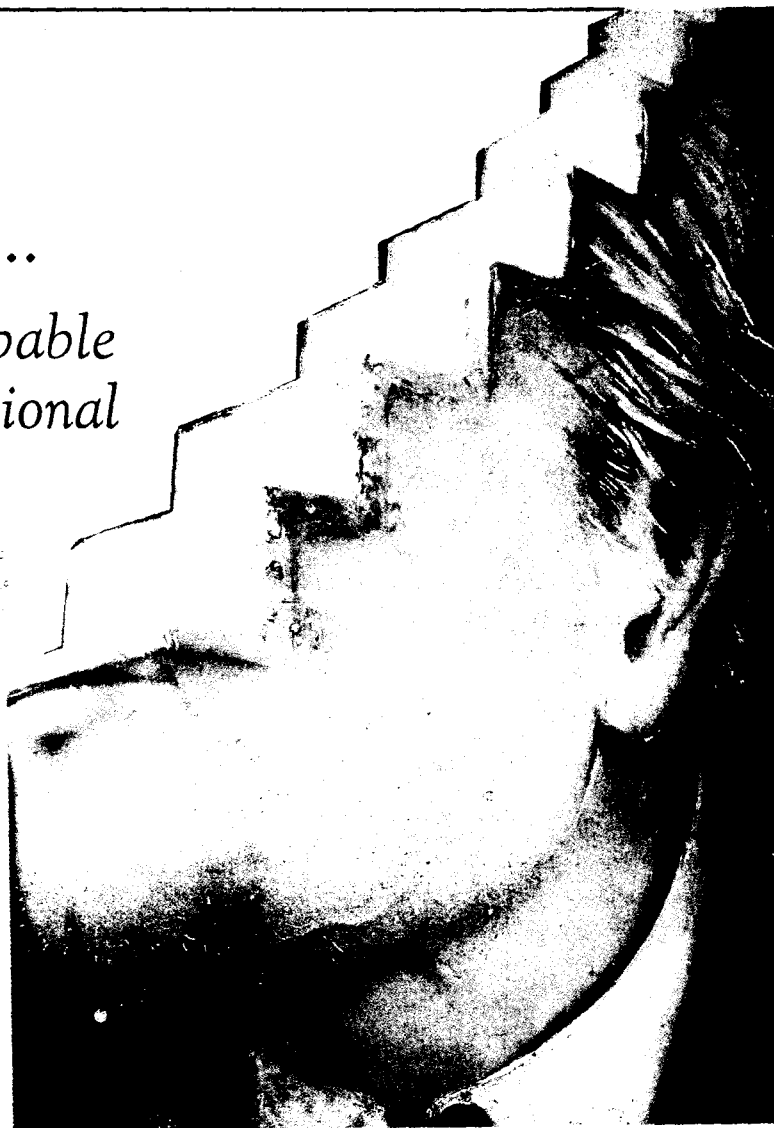
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ITT 21

## Ashes

Continued from page 17

pursued by civilian representatives in Geneva.

Even more important was the government's increasing assertiveness vis-a-vis the military. Some cabinet ministers had been calling for cuts in defense spending and parliamentary accountability of military personnel. It also appeared that the government was prepared to dismiss two of Zia's top associates, Gen. Gul, the head of the Inter-Service Intelligence Agency (ISI), and another top general. A government report apparently found the two responsible for the explosion at an ammunition dump (for the mujahedin) near Islamabad in April. Hundreds of people were killed when rockets rained down on the capital.

One June 15 Zia had announced the enforcement of Koranic-Shariah law, which was intended to make the Koran the source of all law and which authorized the courts to strike down any laws contrary to Islamic precepts. The likely result of this measure would have been the cancellation of the rights enshrined in the Family Law Ordinances of the early 1960s, which gave women a whole range of civil and political rights. In late June, women in about half a dozen cities held peaceful marches to oppose Zia's action. They were promptly set upon by police in every city, who brutally beat and tear-gassed protesters, as well as arresting a number of them. These protests went unreported by the *Times* and received scant attention elsewhere in the U.S. media.

Other problems in the "fledgling young democracy" include the use of torture, a large number of executions (according to Amnesty International, 2,105 prisoners were under sentence of death as of December 1984), court-ordered floggings, approximately 200 political prisoners convicted during the period of martial law (by "military courts that employed extremely summary procedures and denied fundamental elements of due process," according to a report put out by Americas Watch and the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights) and the short-term arrest of hundreds of opposition-party followers for peaceful activities in 1987.



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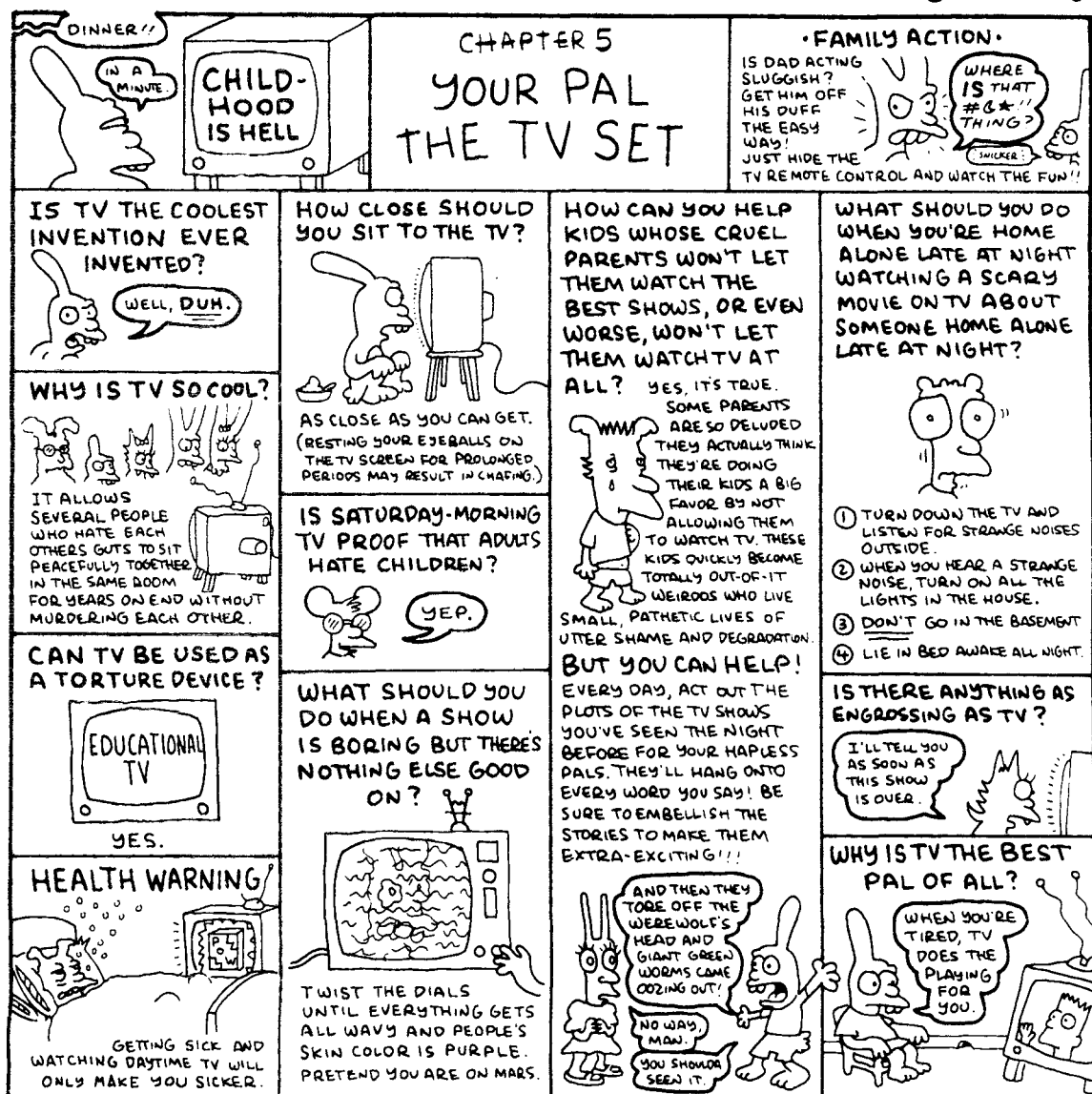
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### LIFE IN HELL

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By Dean Robbins

**L**AST SPRING, *GOOD MORNING, VIETNAM* spun off a single of Louis Armstrong's "What a Wonderful World." When it became a hit I was pleasantly surprised, but not astonished. After all, this is the man who—in his '60s—unseated the Beatles with the unlikely chart-topper "Hello Dolly." No generation, it seems, is immune to the Armstrong appeal.

That's because Armstrong transcended his chosen musical idiom. He was a genius of the spirit, and the pure joy in his work is irrefutable. It's as therapeutic today as it was in the '20s.

Though Armstrong is one of the country's most important musical figures, his genius is widely misunderstood because he's so badly represented on disc. Record companies tend to focus on Satchmo the entertainer: the gravel-voiced clown who sang brassy showtunes and played a little trumpet on the side. But recordings like the Hot Five series—65 small-group gems from the '20s that changed the course of American music—have been available in this country only sporadically.

**Louis Louis:** Recently, Columbia decided to spill all the Hot Five recordings from its treasure chest. And RCA is also rereleasing his records, including 1970's remarkable *What a Wonderful World*. This record, along with the first two installments of the Hot Five series, contradicts the common view of Armstrong as a mere smiling showbiz star.

The Hot Five series, which will comprise four records, is practically the starting point of American music. Before Armstrong there were martial ditties and sentimental ballads. There were the rather limited forms of blues and ragtime. And there was jazz, but it was essentially a folk music with little room for personal expression.

With his Hot Five sides, recorded between 1926 and 1928, Armstrong changed all that. On the spur of the moment, he could spin off solos that expressed his vibrant personality. He singlehandedly transformed jazz into an improviser's art, one whose borders expanded to accommodate his prodigious imagination. The grandeur and virtuosity of performances like "Cornet Chop Suey" and "King of the Zulus" established jazz as America's indigenous art music.

**The inventor of jazz:** Everyone scrambled to keep up with Armstrong's innovations, to the point where jazz music itself became practically an outgrowth of his style. And by remaking jazz in his own image, Armstrong indirectly affected the genres that grew out of it: R&B, rock and various forms of modern "classical" music.

In 1929 Armstrong was in an unusual position. He'd elevated jazz to a serious form of expression, yet he was still seen as a popular entertainer. To make things worse, his unscrupulous managers treated him like a circus attraction. In the '30s and '40s they stuck him with a corny big band, peddled him to Hollywood and generally drove him like a mule. Armstrong's showmanship opened doors for black performers, but he paid the price: he became a star whose audience cared more about flash than finesse.

Armstrong's artistry suffered, but didn't disappear. He was a musical genius who

loved to make people happy, and as a result he blurred the distinction between art and entertainment. He did some of his best work in commercial contexts, mixing majestic trumpet solos and the kind of good-natured mugging that touched a wide audience.

By the '50s Armstrong had been transformed into an American institution, yet he remained courageous in both his music and his personal life. In the wake of a violent racial encounter in Little Rock, he bitterly denounced Eisenhower and the U.S. government for "the way they are treating my people." The white establishment that had accepted him on its own terms now lashed out: fellow performers denounced him, newspaper columnists called him an "ingrate" and venues shut their doors in his face.

Issues and reissues: Armstrong stayed true to his mission of making people happy, but such experiences made his good cheer more bitter-sweet. This is evident on RCA's reissue of *What a Wonderful World*. Recorded in 1970, it was Armstrong's last studio session. He was 70, and no longer under the influence of his crude manager, Joe Glaser, who'd died the year before. (Glaser is the one who'd wedded him to big-time showbiz and always urged him to "smile, goddammit, smile!") With Glaser gone perhaps Armstrong felt that he could go out on a limb and make a serious statement to the fans he loved so dearly.

And Armstrong's choice of material is astounding: "We Shall Overcome," "The Creator Has a Master Plan" (a Pharoah Sanders composition from the free-jazz era) and John

Lennon's "Give Peace a Chance" (recorded while American troops were still mired in Vietnam). It's as if Armstrong, in his valedictory work,

## Reissues of Louis Armstrong's

wanted to bridge all gaps: between races, between nations and even between himself and the modern jazz musicians who'd scorned him.

The album contains a good deal of schlock, but it's elevated by Arm-

## late and early work testify

strong's soul. Orchestrated by modern jazzman Oliver Nelson (whom Glaser probably would have nixed), the recordings show several sides of Armstrong's personality: his wit, warmth, melancholy and exuber-

## to an enduring genius.

ance. Near the end of "We Shall Overcome" he's overcome by emotion, interjecting: "My, my...what a beautiful song! Our song!" The gos-

# POPS'



# MUSIC

gospel-flavored "Give Peace a Chance" is way out of his range, so he limits himself to a small (but enthusiastic) role on the bridge. Apparently he just wanted to lend his voice to the call for peace.

The highlight, however, is "What a Wonderful World." Armstrong begins with a spoken statement about world problems like war, hunger and pollution. Before the rhythm section kicks in he offers a solution: "Love, baby, love...that's the secret. If lots more of us loved each other, we'd solve lots more problems. And, man, this world would be a gasser!"

It's a simplistic message, but the depth of experience in Armstrong's voice makes the sentiment ring true. One is tempted to join in on the tagline, a gravelly affirmation that serves as Satchmo's fond farewell: "Oh yessss....!"

Dean Robbins is arts editor of the Madison, Wis., weekly *Isthmus*.